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BRITISH FOREIGN POLICY  
from 1815 to 1933

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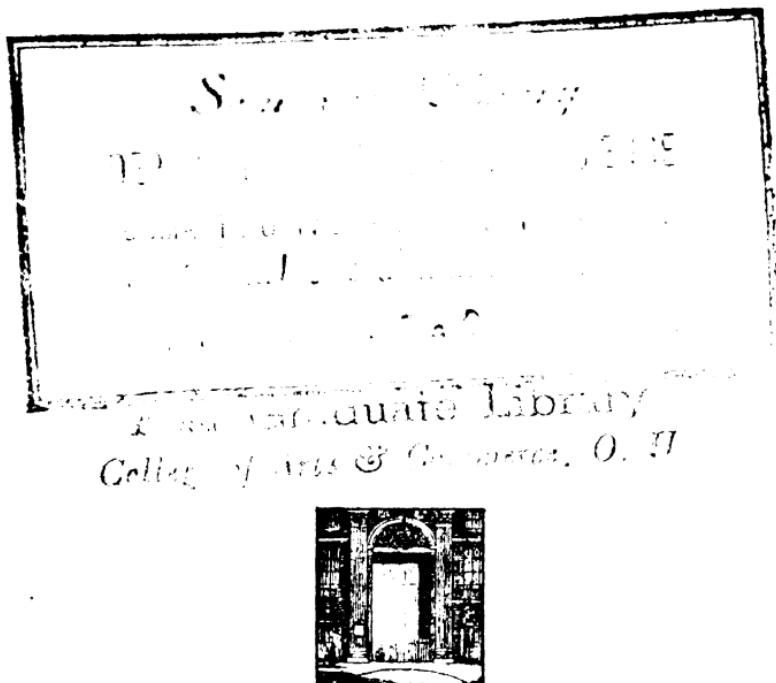
NOTES ON BRITISH HISTORY

BRITISH  
FOREIGN POLICY  
from 1815 to 1933

by

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## *PREFACE*

**T**HIS book has been written to help students who are taking the latest period of British History for the Higher Certificate, Scholarship and University Examinations. But the author hopes that his attempt to trace the development of British Foreign Policy from 1815 to 1933 will prove helpful to others who are interested in current history. He has therefore carried the story beyond the period usually set for examinations ; he has tried to put in their proper setting questions which to-day are pressing for solution ; and to show the great importance of the struggle between Nationalism and Internationalism out of which present problems of Foreign Policy have arisen.

References are given to books, often of recent publication, in which further information may be found. The full bibliographies which many of these contain will enable advanced students to obtain additional material.

The author acknowledges with gratitude the kind help he has received from Professor R. B. Mowat, M.A., Mr. N. L. Cooper, M.A., Librarian, and Mr. J. S. Cox, M.A., Sub-Librarian, of the University of Bristol ; and from Mr. J. Ross, F.L.A., Librarian of the City of Bristol.

W. EDWARDS

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## *INTRODUCTION*

THE international Congress of Vienna which reconstituted the state system of Europe after the Napoleonic War provoked the opposition of Nationalists who desired to make Germany and Italy into united Kingdoms and to deliver Belgium from the rule of Holland. It led in many states to the re-establishment of despotism and thus gave a great impetus to the cause of Liberalism, which aimed at substituting for absolute monarchy a constitutional form of government which would limit the power of the Crown and protect the liberty of the subject.

But to the Czar Alexander I the new order seemed an excellent arrangement and he tried to form a Holy Alliance to maintain it. The Holy Alliance proved, as Metternich said, 'a sonorous nothing', but it was followed by a tendency to common action between Russia, Prussia and Austria which, although often interrupted, did not finally cease until Russia and France made the *Dual Entente* in 1893.

The more practical Congress System was an attempt of Great Britain, France, Russia, Austria and Prussia to maintain the peace of Europe by holding meetings to settle any problems that might lead to war. Russia, Austria and Prussia thought that the chief duty of a Congress was to uphold the settlement made at Vienna and that, if necessary, existing conditions should be maintained by the armed intervention of the Powers. Castlereagh and Canning strongly denied the right of the Powers to intervene in the internal politics of any nation. To the assertion of the right of 'intervention' on behalf of kings Great Britain opposed the principle of 'non-intervention', which would allow national aspirations to have full scope and would enable subjects to work out their own political salvation without

foreign interference. This vital difference broke up the Congress System. Henceforth Great Britain strove to maintain the peace of Europe not as a member of a formal Congress of the Powers but either through the less formal and rather spasmodic Concert of Europe or by joint action with individual states.

British Foreign Policy from 1815 to 1865 was largely an assertion of non-intervention. Great Britain resisted the attempts of the Powers to intervene in the internal affairs of smaller states. She was unwilling to intervene herself to promote the causes of Nationalism and Liberalism although many Englishmen strongly sympathized with them. But the principle of non-intervention was not absolute. All British ministers recognized that obligations incurred by treaty might make intervention necessary, and realized that the duty of protecting their nationals might involve direct intervention on their behalf. On some occasions Great Britain acted contrary to her own theory. Counter-intervention is difficult to distinguish from intervention, and Palmerston, who aimed at 'getting the affairs of Europe into trim', made himself and Great Britain unpopular by interference, direct or indirect, in the internal affairs of other nations.

Foreign Policy during this period was complicated by difficulties that arose with Russia, France and the United States. British statesmen and the British public regarded the Russian Empire as the incarnation of despotism and viewed with alarm her attempt to strengthen her authority in the Near East. The maintenance of the integrity of Turkey as a bulwark against Russian aggression became a cardinal point of British Foreign Policy.

After 1830 France and Great Britain were the leading constitutional states in Europe, and in the Crimean War the two countries fought a common enemy for the first time since the days of Cromwell. But France found that her designs were often frustrated by 'perfidious Albion', and Englishmen considered that the policy of France was unduly aggressive. Each country was gravely suspicious of the other; war was avoided, but mutual friendship was never firmly established.

Castlereagh's enlightened policy materially contributed to the maintenance of peace between Great Britain and the United States in the nineteenth century. But the Monroe doctrine prevented any alliance ; the old question as to the freedom of the seas remained unsettled ; serious disputes arose as to the boundaries of Canada ; the American Civil War led to grave differences. Difficulties were aggravated by an unfriendly feeling that hampered negotiations. The United States thought that Great Britain was trying to bully them ; the British considered that American diplomacy was sometimes aggressive and sometimes childish.

A new policy was adopted when the first Liberal ministry took office in 1868. The Palmerstonian tradition was discredited ; Great Britain no longer tried to act as the headmaster of Europe.

**Splendid Isolation, 1868-1902** Mr. Gladstone was a strong supporter of European peace, but domestic problems were his chief concern. Great Britain now entered upon a period of Splendid Isolation. She played a leading part in the Concert of Europe but refused to fetter her liberty by making an alliance with any other Power, and remained aloof both from the Triple Alliance which was formed by Germany, Austria and Italy in 1882 and the *Dual Entente* which France concluded with Russia in 1893.

After the end of the Franco-German War both Germany and France adopted a policy of colonial expansion. Germany hoped that colonies would give her new markets for her growing trade and provide German homes for emigrants from the Fatherland. France hoped by the extension of her colonial empire to recover the prestige she had lost in the late war. Both countries found in the world-wide British Empire a formidable obstacle to their new policy. German and British interests clashed in Zanzibar, New Guinea, China, Samoa and other islands in the Pacific Ocean. France bitterly resented the ascendancy Great Britain had established in Egypt, and her activities in the Valley of the Niger, Indo-China and Madagascar brought her into sharp conflict with the British Foreign Office.

The advance of Russia in the Middle East threatened the

North-East Frontier of India and compelled Great Britain to adopt a forward policy in Afghanistan and the neighbouring countries. The extension of Russian influence in the Far East led to a growing friendship between Great Britain and Japan which was soon to have most important results.

The Boer War, 1899-1902, seriously weakened the influence of Great Britain on the Continent, where strong sympathy was felt for the Boers, and seemed to show that her military power had declined. The position of Great Britain appeared to be so weak that her isolation had become no longer splendid but dangerous, and she therefore abandoned the policy of Splendid Isolation for a policy of *Ententes*.

In three years Great Britain made alliances of supreme importance. The alliance she made with Japan on January 30th, 1902, re-established the prestige she had lost in the Boer War and relieved her of the necessity of maintaining a strong fleet in the Pacific. On April 8th, 1904, the *Entente Cordiale* was concluded with France. It was due largely to the apprehension aroused by the new naval programme of Germany; it settled the serious differences that had long embittered the relations between the contracting parties; the common bond of friendship with France facilitated the formation in 1907 of the *Triple Entente* between Great Britain, France and Russia.

Europe was now divided into two groups, the Triple Alliance and the *Triple Entente*. Each professed that its aims were purely defensive, each feared that the other would adopt an aggressive policy; and every nation sought to ensure its own safety by joining in a race for armaments which made war inevitable.

Germany thought that Great Britain had joined in a policy to encircle her with enemies; the latter feared that German policy was threatening British interests; and although from time to time efforts were made to establish friendship between the two Powers their intercourse was always marked by suspicion and sometimes by hostility. In the summer of 1914 official relations seemed to show a marked improvement; but national feeling on both sides had been embittered by commercial rivalry and conflicting colonial interests, and the real

policy of the German government offered a striking contrast to the professions of friendship which were made in London by the German Ambassador. When the Archduke Francis Ferdinand was murdered at Serajevo, Sir Edward Grey, the British Foreign Secretary, made strenuous efforts to avert war and, after war had broken out between Austria and Serbia, to prevent it from becoming a struggle between the Triple Alliance and the *Triple Entente*. By invading Belgium Germany took the one step which could unite all British parties against her and, in accordance with the obligation she had incurred by signing the 'scrap of paper' in 1839, Great Britain declared war on Germany at 11 p.m. on August 3rd, 1914.

At the beginning of the war Great Britain endeavoured to win for the *Triple Entente* the help of other nations. Italy joined the Allies in May 1915 and Roumania in August 1916, but Turkey and Bulgaria supported the Central Powers.

The war gradually became a blockade of Germany, enforced mainly by the British Navy, and serious differences arose between Great Britain and the United States which protested against the interference with neutral trade which was caused by the blockade. An extremely difficult situation was relieved when the United States declared war on Germany on April 6th, 1917.

The war ended on November 11th, 1918, with the victory of the Allies, and an International Congress, in which Mr. Lloyd George played a leading part, compelled Germany, which had not been represented at the Congress, to accept the Peace Treaty of Versailles on June 28th, 1919. The terms of the international Peace Treaty provoked strong national protests and subsequent history has been largely concerned with the conflict that has arisen between Internationalism and Nationalism. Recent British Foreign Policy has been an attempt to vindicate the principle of Internationalism, and by international co-operation to maintain peace, to remedy the defects and to make up the deficiencies of the Treaty of Versailles.



## CHAPTER I

### CASTLEREAGH AND THE CONGRESS SYSTEM

**T**HE final defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo profoundly affected the position of Great Britain. Down to 1815 her navy had formed one of the bulwarks that protected Europe from the aggression of France and her wealth had been used to finance her allies. After 1815 the **The Position of Great Britain** Balance of European Power shifted to the East and the leading Powers were Russia, Austria and Prussia, whose military strength was far greater than that of Great Britain, and against whom her navy was of little use. The influence of Great Britain was henceforth to be exerted by diplomacy and not by arms, and Castlereagh indicated the lines on which British Foreign Policy was to proceed. 'In the present state of Europe', he said, 'it is the province of Great Britain to turn the confidence she has inspired to the account of peace by exercising a conciliatory influence between the Powers rather than to put herself at the head of any combinations of Courts to keep others in check.'

The Congress of Vienna, in which the Powers strove to settle the affairs of Europe after Napoleon's power had been shattered at Waterloo, disregarded two principles which were to prove a great source of discord for fifty years. It recognized neither Nationalism nor Liberalism.

**Nationalism** The oppression of Napoleon had given a strong impetus to the growth of Nationalism, particularly in Spain, Russia, Germany and Italy. But the Congress gave Venetia and Lombardy to Austria; it divided Germany into thirty-eight separate states; it placed Belgium in subjection to Holland and Norway to Sweden. The Congress thus led to the War of Belgian Independence, and to

serious differences between Norway and Sweden. It caused the Risorgimento which made Italy a nation instead of a geographical expression. Only by Bismarck's policy of 'blood and iron' were the German States welded into a Single Empire. 'The cannon of Solferino, Sadowa and Sedan tore to pieces the web spun by Metternich.'

The Congress did not formally recognize the principle of Legitimacy according to which prescription gave a monarch a legitimate title to his throne. But many former **Liberalism** rulers were confirmed on, or restored to, their thrones. Ferdinand I was recognized as King of Naples, Ferdinand VII was restored to the throne of Spain, and many Frenchmen rejoiced at the success of these Bourbon Princes. Austrian Archdukes received the Duchies of Tuscany and Modena; much of the Duchy of Ferrara was given to the Pope. In Germany the princely families regained their old possessions. The German princes were required by the Congress to establish constitutional rule, and Saxe-Weimar, Bavaria and Baden tried, with some success, to carry out this policy. But, generally, the new rulers of Europe set up absolute government and thus came into collision with Liberalism. Liberalism owed much to the influence of the French Revolution and asserted the Sovereignty of the People. But it was a new movement based not on sentiment like the French Revolution, but on the philosophic study of facts. It was strongly supported by the middle class and the Universities. It aimed at establishing constitutional government in which the middle class would be adequately represented, and at securing for every citizen such freedom of speech and action as was consistent with the rights of his fellows. A conflict between the new Liberalism and Despotism was inevitable, and Germany, Spain, Portugal and Italy were soon to be distracted by fierce struggles which led to civil war. The American colonies of Spain had revolted in 1808 when Joseph Bonaparte was made King. Ferdinand VII had failed to conquer them and the question of the attitude the Powers should adopt towards the Liberal movement in Europe and the Spanish colonies in America soon caused serious differences of policy.

**The Quadruple Alliance** Europe was utterly weary of war and the Congress of Vienna aimed at constructing 'a political system which should ensure to Europe an endurance of peaceful conditions among her States'. France was still regarded as the enemy, but the establishment of Prussia on the Rhine, the German and Swiss Confederations, and the formation of the Netherlands as a barrier kingdom limited her chances of aggression. An allied army under the Duke of Wellington occupied France and the Quadruple Alliance of Britain, Austria, Prussia and Russia, which was finally established on November 20th, 1815, was prepared to take active measures if necessary to protect Europe from further aggression by France, and to consider 'such measures as . . . shall be judged most salutary for the peace and prosperity of the nations and for the maintenance of the peace of Europe'.

But this attempt to establish an International Confederation of the Greater Powers revealed serious differences between Britain and her allies. Great Britain was strongly Nationalist and Castlereagh from the first maintained that no general principles of intervention should be laid down by the Powers. The problem of intervention was destined soon to wreck the Congress System which originated in the Quadruple Alliance.

Alexander I, a man of strong religious feeling, who devoted much of his time to the study of the Bible, wished to take **The Holy Alliance** further steps to maintain the peace that the Powers fondly imagined had been established by the Congress of Vienna. He desired to supplement the political alliance of the four Powers by a religious union, and in September 1815, induced Prussia and Austria to join Russia in the Holy Alliance. The treaty on which the Holy Alliance was based declared that 'the eternal religion of God the Preserver of mankind . . . should . . . influence the resolutions of princes and guide all their steps', and pledged the members 'to protect religion, peace and justice'. All the countries of Europe joined the Alliance except Great Britain. The Regent graciously expressed his agreement with the principles of the Alliance, although his own life was but little affected by them, but regretted that the conditions

of government in Britain prevented him from joining. Castlereagh roundly declared that the Holy Alliance was 'a piece of sublime mystery and nonsense', and asserted, what was quite true, that Alexander's mind was 'not quite sound'.

The Holy Alliance proved a mere phantom, but it had an unfortunate effect. It was regarded as a Trade Union of Kings which would protect its members against the spread of Liberal doctrines and which was specially hostile towards France. All European Liberals regarded the Holy Alliance as essentially unholy.

Castlereagh was strongly in favour of holding Congresses, though not at fixed intervals as Alexander wished; and the <sup>The Congress</sup> introduction of the Congress System was largely <sup>System</sup> due to his support. The Allied Powers had often conferred together in time of war, but the idea that they should meet in Congresses in time of peace was, as Castlereagh declared, 'a new discovery' in the government of Europe.

Communication by letter was slow. A dispatch took about a fortnight to go from London to Vienna and twice as long to reach St. Petersburg, and lengthy correspondence often followed as to the exact meaning of dispatches. Castlereagh's great object was the maintenance of peace and his attitude towards the nations of Europe was one of cordial co-operation and unrelaxing vigilance. His personal efforts had greatly contributed to the apparent success of the Congress of Vienna. He felt that the personal intercourse of the rulers of Europe would be the most speedy and effective means of solving any problems that might arise. He thought that friendly hobnobbing might prove a useful instrument of diplomacy.

Four Congresses were held, at Aix-la-Chapelle in 1818, Troppau in 1820, Laibach in 1821, and Verona in 1822.

The Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle was successful, largely owing to the personal influence which Castlereagh exercised <sup>The Congress</sup> over the Czar and Metternich. It ordered the <sup>of Aix-la-</sup> allied army of occupation to evacuate France. <sup>Chapelle, 1818</sup> While maintaining the Quadruple Alliance as a means of counteracting any danger that might arise from France, it admitted that country as an associate on equal

terms and thus formed a Quintuple Alliance. It asserted its authority as a Court of Appeal for Europe by compelling Charles XIV of Sweden to fulfil his obligations to Denmark. It considered, but did not solve, some problems that had arisen about Bavaria and Baden. The Congress did something to 'provide the transparent soul of the Holy Alliance with a body'.

But even at Aix-la-Chapelle differences appeared which were soon to grow wider and wreck the Congress System.

The most serious arose on the question of intervention. Great Britain owed her constitution to the 'Glorious' Revolution of 1688 and entirely disapproved of the absolute government which the Emperors of Russia and Austria exercised in their own territories and which Metternich wished to establish in Germany. The rulers of Austria, Prussia and Russia could take their own courses, but British foreign policy was ultimately dependent upon the sanction of Parliament. Great Britain, too, was strongly Nationalist and held that every nation had an unqualified right to settle its own form of government, and that no country should interfere in the internal affairs of another. The acceptance of this principle would have safeguarded the interests of the Smaller Powers which were not represented on the Quintuple Alliance. But the growth of Liberalism seriously alarmed the despotic rulers of Europe. Alexander, strongly influenced by Metternich, was anxious to use the united force of the Alliance to protect Kings whose authority might be weakened by the development of constitutional government in accordance with Liberal principles. He wished to guarantee thrones as well as territories. Castlereagh objected to any general guarantee of established power, and successfully resisted the suggestion of Prussia that a European army supplied by each of the Powers should be stationed at Brussels under the command of Wellington to act as a force of international police. Instead of giving the general guarantee which the Czar desired the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle merely stated that, while the Powers were determined to maintain the Quintuple Alliance, the aim of the union was to preserve peace on the basis of respect for treaties and that no 'partial

unions' should be held to deal with the affairs of other states except on the invitation, and if necessary, with the presence of representatives of the states concerned. The cracks were papered over and for a time the weakness, which was soon to undermine the fabric, was concealed.

By 1820 the situation was profoundly affected by risings that broke out in Naples and Spain. The risings, originally military, were due to the conditions of army <sup>Risings in Naples, Spain and Portugal</sup> service ; Spanish soldiers refused to serve against the American colonies who had revolted against Spain ; the old officers of Murat resented the favouritism shown by Ferdinand I to his own comrades. But in each case the movement became constitutional. Colonel Riego demanded that the constitution which had been granted in 1812 should be put into force in Spain ; General Pépé wished to secure a similar constitution for Naples.

The example of Spain was followed by Portugal. King John VI was residing in Brazil and a Regency, in which British influence was strong, governed the country. The authority of Beresford, the Commander-in-Chief, was strongly resented. In August 1820 a successful rebellion led to the expulsion of British officers from the army and the establishment of a Liberal constitution which seriously limited the power of the King who returned to Portugal in 1821.

Tatishev, the Czar's ambassador at Madrid, had striven to strengthen the influence of Russia at the Spanish Court, and <sup>Attitude of the Powers</sup> the sale of eight Russian battleships to Spain for £2,000,000 for use against her rebel colonies gratified the Spaniards and alarmed the chancelleries of Europe. The discovery that the ships were utterly unseaworthy diminished both the gratification and the alarm. Alexander had hitherto shown some sympathy with Liberalism owing to the influence of his Jacobin tutor La Harpe, but the murder of his agent Kotzebue at Jena in March 1819, the assassination of the Duc de Berri in February 1820, and the revolt of the Semonowsky regiment in October 1820, led him to believe that there was a general conspiracy in Europe in favour of revolution and henceforth his policy was purely reactionary. He was now anxious to protect Ferdinand VII

against his rebellious subjects and desired to secure the permission of the Alliance to send 15,000 Russian soldiers through Piedmont and the South of France to put down the Spanish Liberals. Metternich objected to the passage of Russian troops through Piedmont and resisted the proposal that another Congress should be called to sanction Russian intervention in Spain. But when the Neapolitan revolution broke out he felt that Austria's interest in the North of Italy made intervention essential and sought the sanction of a Congress for the action he proposed to take.

Castlereagh again asserted the principle of non-intervention, subject to the obligations of treaties and the duty of every nation to protect its own subjects. Britain was bound by a Treaty of 'Alliance and Friendship', made in 1373, to protect Portugal from foreign attack, but while asserting that Britain would fulfil her obligation if necessary, he instructed the British ambassador to abstain from any interference in the internal affairs of the country. He recognized that the revolution in Naples might imperil the authority over Venetia and Lombardy which had been granted to Austria by the Congress of Vienna, and acknowledged that in these circumstances Austria had a right to intervene in Italy. He had refused to assist Spain to recover her American colonies and strenuously denied the rights of the Powers to intervene on behalf of Spain, but he sent a squadron under Sir Thomas Hardy to protect British merchants in the Spanish colonies. He again denied the right of the Alliance to lay down rules of general application and objected to the actions of the Czar and Metternich in seeking its sanction for their proposed intervention in Spain and Italy. He ordered the British ambassador in Madrid to follow a strictly neutral course. When a revival of Bonapartism in France led the Czar to suggest that the ambassadors of the Quadruple Alliance should hold a conference to decide on a plan of mutual action he forbade Sir Charles Stuart to attend, on the ground that such an action would be an 'unjustifiable interference with (the) internal affairs' of France.

The prospects for the Conference of Troppau were not good. Recent events had widened the breach between Great

Britain and the Alliance, and Lord Charles Stewart, Castlereagh's brother, and the representative of France were instructed to attend only as observers, not as plenipotentiaries. The Czar was anxious to extend the influence of Russia in Germany ; he resented Metternich's attempt to secure the supremacy of Austria over the lesser German States and was jealous of the power that Austria had secured in Italy. But Metternich, in 'a confidential chat over a cup of tea', persuaded Alexander that united action was essential to check the danger of a general revolution in Europe and on November 19th, 1820, Austria, Prussia and Russia issued the famous 'Troppau Protocol'. The Protocol declared that 'States which have undergone a change of government due to revolution, the results of which threaten other States, *ipso facto*, cease to be members of the European Alliance, and remain excluded from it until their situation gives guarantees for legal order and stability. . . . If, owing to such alterations, immediate danger threatens other states, the Powers bind themselves by peaceful means, or if need be by arms, to bring back the guilty state into the bosom of the Great Alliance.' Castlereagh could not accept the Protocol which asserted the general right of the Great Powers to be the armed guardians of thrones, involved the right of intervention, threatened the liberty of smaller states and cast a slur upon the Glorious Rebellion of 1688. Stewart strongly protested against the Protocol ; Castlereagh asserted that 'it is destructive of all correct notions of internal sovereign authority' and denied the right of the Alliance to judge and to condemn the actions of other states. But he still believed in Congresses and, in spite of Stewart's recent protest, Great Britain remained a member of the Alliance, although the principles laid down in the Protocol of Troppau rendered it unlikely that she would be able to co-operate with the Eastern Powers.

The Conference of Laibach which met in January 1821 was specially concerned with the affairs of Naples. Ferdinand I attended the Conference and asked the Alliance to aid him to restore absolute monarchy, although before leaving Naples he had sworn to maintain

the constitution of 1812. The Conference authorized Metternich to take action against the Neapolitan rebels and to crush the risings which had taken place in Piedmont. Austria, Prussia and Russia reaffirmed the Troppau Protocol owing to the influence of Alexander, who wished to use the united power of the Alliance to crush the revolutionists in Spain. Castlereagh refused 'to recognize the principle that one State was entitled to interfere with another because changes might be effected in its government in a way of which the former State disapproved'. France supported Britain and the Alliance seemed to be broken. The three Eastern Powers which stood for despotic government had practically formed a 'Neo-Holy Alliance',<sup>1</sup> the principles of which were at variance with those of the two Western constitutional states.

The Greeks, who wished to escape from Turkish mal-administration and to restore the Byzantine Empire, rose **The Greek Revolt** against Turkey in 1821, and it seemed likely that Russia would support the Greek cause. The Ultra Royalist party in France remembered the old Family Compact and desired to intervene in Spain on behalf of a Bourbon King. The immediate result was a closer union between Austria and England. These two Powers were old allies and their interests coincided. Both feared an extension of Russian power at the expense of Turkey for this would mean danger both to the eastern frontier of Austria and to British interests in the Mediterranean and the East. Both therefore were determined to maintain the Turkish Empire as a bulwark against Russia. Castlereagh also feared that if Russia intervened alone in Turkey a European War might follow and he was anxious to prevent this at all costs. Metternich maintained that the Alliance had been formed to keep peace on the basis of existing treaties, which included treaties made with Turkey.

France was the traditional enemy of Great Britain; their interests clashed in the Mediterranean and France had approved of the repressive policy adopted by Spain in her colonies against British merchants. British statesmen viewed with alarm the possible extension of French influence in Spain.

<sup>1</sup> So named by Mr. H. W. V. Temperley.

Castlereagh therefore insisted on 'rigid abstinence from any interference in the internal affairs of Spain', or in the relations between Spain and her colonies. But, to protect British merchants, he recognized in 1822 the commercial flags of the revolted Spanish Colonies and asserted that Britain must retain her right of independent action in regard to them.

The Czar yielded to Castlereagh's plea of non-intervention and to Metternich's argument that the principles of the Alliance involved the maintenance of treaties. The Sultan suppressed the rebellion that had broken out in Moldavia and Wallachia and a large force of Turkish troops occupied these Principalities. The Czar's refusal to intervene in Greece greatly disappointed his own people and 'he sacrificed the prestige of Russia in the East to his dreams of a Federated Europe'. But there was always the danger that hasty action on the part of the Sultan might compel Alexander to take up arms; the Czar feared that popular feeling in Russia might force him to support the Greek cause; Capo d'Istria, the Russian Foreign Secretary, who was a native of Corfu, did all he could to persuade the Czar to save his fellow countrymen from the Turkish yoke.

Castlereagh insisted that the Greeks should retain the form of government which had been imposed on them by treaties of Success of Castlereagh's Diplomacy and urged them to wait until 'the hand of time and Providence' should improve their lot. He warned the Sultan that he would get no help from the Western Powers if he provoked Alexander. He ordered Strangford, the British ambassador, to urge him to avert the danger of war by evacuating the Principalities, the occupation of which was strongly resented by Russia, and protecting the Greek religion. The Sultan procrastinated and Metternich suggested that the Allied Powers should unite to compel him to come to terms, but Castlereagh stuck to his principles and would not hear of joint intervention. At last Strangford's vigorous representations succeeded. The Sultan promised to accept the terms of Russia, the danger of Russian intervention was averted, and Strangford rejoiced that 'the work which Peter the Great began and his successors continued is shaken to its foundations'

Alexander gave up, for a time, the thought of war with Turkey, but now began to urge that the Alliance should send a joint army, in accordance with the terms of the Protocol of Troppau, to support Ferdinand VII in Spain. The French strongly objected to the passage of such an army through France and thought that France alone should intervene. Metternich, who feared that France and Russia might come to an agreement which would seriously prejudice Austria, again relied on the diplomacy of the British Foreign Secretary, who asserted that 'a rigid abstinence from any interference in the internal affairs of (Spain) must be considered as forming the basis of His Majesty's policy'. A Conference was to be held at Vienna to consider the whole problem and Castlereagh, who was assured of the support of Austria and Prussia, proposed to attend the Conference and to confer with Villèle, the French Minister, on his way.

But he was now quite worn out. His mind gave way. His friends removed the pistol he always carried and hid his razors, but on August 12th, 1822, he found a pen-knife, which his valet had overlooked, in the drawer of his washstand and cut his throat. He died immediately.

Castlereagh held that it was the duty of Great Britain 'to bring back the world to peaceful habits', and he had tried <sup>Castlereagh's</sup> to establish a Congress System as a means of Policy preserving peace in Europe. But the Eastern Powers tried to make it political as well as territorial, and to use it as a weapon against Liberalism; their claim to the right of intervention was inconsistent with national liberty and political development.

Castlereagh considered that internal revolution was less likely to endanger the peace of Europe than foreign intervention and insisted on non-intervention as a general principle, although he believed that in special cases a state might be compelled to intervene to carry out its treaty obligations or to protect its nationals. Although the 'most European' of Foreign Secretaries he showed himself willing and able to maintain the interests of British subjects. His work was largely preventive and negative. He failed to realize the political importance of Nationalism and Liberalism, the

leading principles of the nineteenth century. His influence proved a most important factor and was the main cause of the success of the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle, but his desire to establish the Congress System as a means of maintaining the peace of Europe was not realized. The radical differences between the Eastern and Western Powers, the maintenance of national rather than international interests and his own death broke up the System.

Castlereagh rendered great service to Britain by his successful negotiations with the United States. The Treaty of

**Castlereagh and the United States** Ghent had left unsolved the problems which had caused the recent war between Great Britain and the United States. It did nothing to settle the vexed question of the freedom of the seas, which was the main point at issue ; and commercial restrictions, differences as to frontiers and mutual distrust further embittered the relations between the two countries. Castlereagh's conciliatory policy led to a marked improvement. In 1816 he made an agreement with Rush, the American Minister in London, that the number of warships on the Great Lakes should be restricted to the minimum necessary for customs and police. This regulation has been one of the main reasons why no further war has broken out between Great Britain and the United States. He rendered valuable help in the difficult negotiations which attended the sale of Florida by Spain to the United States. He accepted the explanation given by the American ambassador of the high-handed action of General Andrew Jackson who, in 1818, had executed two British subjects, Arbuthnot and Ambrister, on a charge of stirring up Indians against the United States. In the same year he fixed the boundary line of Canada at 49° latitude between the Lake of the Woods to the summit of the Rockies. His policy not only avoided war with the United States in his own days, but established a precedent for arbitration which was to prevent war in the future.

Castlereagh's policy was one of the reasons why since 1815 Great Britain has remained at peace with the United States and, with the exception of the Crimean War, fought no war in Europe until 1914. But few modern statesmen of his

eminence have been so unpopular and he was largely to blame for the disfavour with which he was regarded. His method of working was 'honourable but subterranean'. He consulted Parliament only when he could not work without its sanction; he made no attempt to inform the public of his policy either by speeches or through the Press; even in Parliament his style of oratory, which at times was ungrammatical and almost inarticulate, often failed to reveal the object he was trying to attain. He was very reserved and gave his confidence to few. His contemporaries failed to appreciate his Foreign Policy largely because they were ignorant of what he had done for England. The researches of Professor Webster and other scholars have shown that his desire to win the good will of other nations while maintaining the interests of his own country, and his success in dealing with the special problems of his time, entitle him to be regarded as one of the greatest of British Foreign Secretaries.

## CHAPTER II

### CANNING

**O**N the death of Castlereagh, Canning relinquished the post of Governor-General of India, to which he had just been appointed, and became Foreign Secretary in September 1822.

Canning was as resolutely opposed as Castlereagh to the intervention of the Alliance in the internal affairs of other states. He knew that at the forthcoming Congress of Verona, France would be seeking the sanction of the Alliance for her proposed intervention in Spain and at once defined his position. He declared his opposition to 'periodical meetings of the great Powers' which might involve the limitation of the freedom of smaller states, and declared that Britain 'would not interfere except in great emergencies and then with a commanding force'. He said that he wished to preserve 'the peace of the world and therefore of the independence of the several nations that compose it'. He asserted that Britain's foreign policy was 'respect for the faith of treaties, respect for the independence of nations, respect for the established line of policy known as the Balance of Power and last, but not least, respect for the honour and interests of this country'. Although Canning's policy was largely a continuation of that of Castlereagh it replaced the neutrality which the latter had observed by a strong sympathy with European Liberalism. Canning thought that the British Constitution was the best that the wit of man could devise. He therefore opposed the English Liberals who advocated parliamentary reform but sympathized with those who wished to establish constitutional government on the Continent. He believed that 'England

could teach democratic governments respect for tradition and despotic governments the principles of Liberalism'. But unlike Castlereagh he strongly objected to the Congress System which he regarded as a menace to the cause of Liberty in Europe and to the interests of Britain, and a danger to the independence of all states. His motto was 'each country for itself and God for us all'. He scornfully referred to the Neo-Holy Alliance as the 'Areopagus and all that' and when Castlereagh's strong policy seemed to portend the early end of the system Canning exclaimed, 'We shall have no more Congresses, thank God!' He was determined to promote the interests of his country and resolved to maintain and enhance the prestige of Great Britain on the Continent. He was anxious to treat with the Great Powers individually but not collectively and wished Great Britain to act as an umpire in order to preserve the peace of Europe.

Wellington was sent to the Congress which met at Verona on October 20th, 1822, with strict instructions to protest against joint intervention in Spain, and to inform <sup>The Congress of Verona, 1822</sup> the 'three gentlemen of Verona'<sup>1</sup> that 'to such interference, *come what may*, his Majesty will not be a party'. Owing to Wellington's strong protests Alexander I renounced his scheme for intervention in Spain. Wellington protested against the request of France that the Congress should authorize her to send an army to suppress the Spanish rebels, but the three Eastern Powers agreed to give France moral and material support and to withdraw their representatives from Madrid if such a step became necessary in the interests of France.

Wellington formally withdrew from the Congress of Verona and his withdrawal marks the end of the Congress System founded upon the Quintuple Alliance. France and Britain now acted according to their own interests; they adopted a national policy while the Eastern Powers, the Neo-Holy Alliance, desired to act on international lines. The Concert of Europe for a time became an impossibility.

British ministers viewed with alarm the policy of France.

<sup>1</sup> The name applied by Brougham to the Emperors Alexander I and Francis II and King Frederick William III.

The French had suggested that Bourbon princes should be placed on the thrones of Mexico, Peru, Colombia and Chile. Châteaubriand, the new Foreign Minister, favoured war as a means of strengthening French influence abroad, and a French army was stationed on the Spanish Frontier at the end of 1822, nominally as a *cordon sanitaire* to keep out yellow fever. But it was thought that revolutionary principles and not yellow fever were the object of attack. Great Britain remembered the old Family Compact between France and Spain and feared that France would again secure predominant influence in Spain, would help Spain to conquer her revolted colonies and would use the power thus gained to prejudice the interests of British merchants in South America.

In spite of the strong objection of Great Britain the Duc d'Angoulême, the elder son of Charles X, led an army of 95,000 French troops into Spain on April 7th, 1823. The people welcomed him joyfully with cries of 'Down with the Constitution' and in six weeks he made himself master of Madrid. Ferdinand VII was restored to power and cancelled the constitution he had granted. The Spanish Liberals suffered terribly in the reign of terror which followed the restoration and Angoulême, whose protests against the cruelty of Ferdinand had passed unheeded, refused to accept the honours that the Spanish King offered him.

The success of French intervention in Spain was a triumph for the Neo-Holy Alliance and a serious rebuff for Canning and the Liberal cause. He resolved, as he said later, 'that if France held Spain, it should not be Spain with the Indies'. In October 1823 he clearly stated his policy in a formal memorandum to the Prince de Polignac, the French Ambassador, in which, repeating the views Castlereagh had expressed in 1818, he said that Spain could not regain her lost colonies and protested strongly against French intervention. He stated that if a Conference were held to consider the question, Britain would not attend unless the United States were represented, and said that Britain sought no territorial acquisitions in America but would be satisfied with the treatment of the most favoured nation. Canning's

memorandum showed the French that if they persisted in helping Spain to regain her colonies they would have to face war with England. Hitherto proposed intervention on the part of the Alliance had been met passively, by the assertion of the principle of non-intervention on the part of Britain. But Canning now determined to meet French intervention in the American colonies by British intervention. Like Castlereagh he had hitherto made the defence of British trade in America his main concern and in December 1822 he had sent a fleet to the West Indies to protect British shipping from pirates. Henceforward he was willing to go to war to resist the extension of French influence. His protest proved successful and France abstained from intervening.

Canning now tried to secure the active collaboration of the United States in protecting the Spanish colonies. John

**Canning and the United States** Quincy Adams, the American Foreign Secretary, knew that Britain would certainly make war on

France if the latter took active measures in support of Spain and objected to employ the fleet of the United States 'as a cockboat in the wake of a British man-of-war'. He thought that alliance with any European country would be contrary to the interests of the United States and, largely owing to his influence, President Monroe on December 2nd, 1823, warned the European Powers 'that we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety', and that 'the American continents are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers'. The Spanish problem had involved Canning in a second failure. He wished the United States to take some part in the affairs of Europe, but in answer to his overtures for united action with Britain, President Monroe had laid down the Monroe Doctrine and established the principle of 'America for the Americans'. But this was Canning's last failure.

In January 1824 Canning refused to join a Conference of the Allied Powers with regard to the Spanish Colonies.

In December 1824 Canning and Liverpool, in spite of strong opposition from George IV and Wellington, compelled

the Cabinet to recognize the political independence of Buenos Aires, Colombia, and Mexico. His recognition of their independence was a proof that Britain was determined to act alone in her own interests and without reference to the Neo-Holy Alliance. The President of Mexico said that Britain had rescued America from the disasters of war 'by the interposition of her trident'.

Canning claimed that he had 'called the New World into existence to redress the balance of the Old', but the colonies had practically secured independence before he recognized them, and that independence had been acknowledged by the United States. But his strong action with regard to France had helped the cause of the colonists; his formal recognition secured fairer treatment for British merchants in South America, and for a time made the influence of Britain more powerful than that of the United States in the new republics. Metternich and Alexander I were infuriated by his independent action which had seriously impaired the prestige of the Neo-Holy Alliance and regained for Britain the position she had lost at Verona. They were anxious to weaken the predominant influence that Britain still exercised in Lisbon.

The French invasion of Spain greatly encouraged the Absolutist party in Portugal of whom Dom Miguel, the brother of John VI, was the leader. Dom Miguel compelled John VI to suppress the Cortes and annul the constitution he had granted in 1822. Fear that King John would grant another constitution led to an attempt to dethrone him in favour of Dom Miguel. Canning refused to send a British army to put down the rebels, but despatched a naval squadron to the Tagus to give the King 'moral support'. An attempt of Dom Miguel to kidnap John was frustrated by the British ambassador and the King took refuge on the British flagship, the *Windsor Castle*. The French seemed likely to send troops into Portugal to help Dom Miguel, but Canning's threat that if a French army entered Portugal he would send Hanoverian soldiers to support King John led them to renounce their design. On May 4th King John returned to his palace; Dom Miguel was

compelled to withdraw to Vienna. Thus the danger of French intervention had been successfully met by a threat of counter-intervention. But the new Prime Minister, Subserra, was a strong supporter of the French cause and when in July 1825 a Conference of Austria, England, Brazil and Portugal met in London to consider the new issue that had been raised by the revolt of Brazil against Portugal, abundant proof of Subserra's hostility to Britain was afforded. Canning therefore insisted on his dismissal. Such interference with the Government of Portugal was a glaring case of direct intervention, but Canning held that it was justified as a defence of British interests which were gravely prejudiced by Subserra's policy. Owing to the successful diplomacy of Sir Charles Stuart, King John recognized the independence of Brazil on August 25th and his son Dom Pedro became its first Emperor. Canning had gained another success in defiance of the Neo-Holy Alliance which had urged John to resist the Constitutionalists and had not been consulted when the independence of Brazil was recognized.

On the death of King John VI at Lisbon on March 10th, 1826, Dom Pedro was recognized as King of Portugal and he at once, to Metternich's great disgust, granted a Liberal Constitution. In May he resigned the throne of Portugal in favour of his daughter Donna Maria Gloria who was to accept the new Constitution. But the soldiers who had supported Dom Miguel in 1823 now proclaimed him King and a considerable number withdrew to Spain. A Conference of France, Austria, Russia and Prussia was held at Paris and urged Spain not to surrender the Portuguese troops. Canning strongly protested against this decision and threatened to withdraw the British ambassador from Madrid. Palmella, the Prime Minister of Portugal, appealed for British aid because the Miguelist troops in Spain had made incursions into Portugal. Britain was bound by treaty to maintain the territorial integrity of Portugal and four days after the receipt of Palmella's message Canning sent 5,000 British troops 'to plant the standard of St. George on the heights of Lisbon'. His object was 'not to rule, not to dictate . . . but to defend and preserve the

independence of an ally'. This intervention, which was entirely justified as the fulfilment of treaty obligations, proved successful. Donna Maria's position was secured, and Canning compelled Dom Miguel to take an oath to support the constitution. Largely owing to the influence of Metternich, a marriage was arranged between Miguel and his niece, he returned to Portugal and in February 1828 was appointed Regent.

By the end of 1825 Canning's position was firmly established. Up to that time he had been hampered by the dislike of George IV. As King of Hanover George, a strong supporter of Absolutism, could pursue a policy of his own without reference to his Foreign Secretary. The King's special friends, the Lievens, Esterhazy and Polignac often visited him at his cottage at Windsor, and gave him secret information about foreign affairs without Canning's knowledge. But now Canning had won the confidence of the King ; the 'Cottage Coterie' was broken up and George ceased to intrigue against his own minister.

By this time too Canning's open diplomacy had gained for him the strong support of his countrymen. He was a brilliant orator ; he had always realized the importance of conciliating public opinion and had explained his policy in meetings, in state papers or through the medium of the Press. The people of England had seen copies of the Polignac Memorandum of October 1823 ; Canning publicly explained why in January 1824 he refused to attend a Congress of the Powers about the Spanish Colonies ; he had published his reasons for recognizing the Spanish Colonies. The support of the British people enabled Canning to defy his enemies at home and abroad.

He had refused to work with the Neo-Holy Alliance. He allowed the British representative to attend only five out of sixty-six conferences of ambassadors that were held at Paris between 1822 and 1826. The instructions he gave to Wellington had broken the Quintuple Alliance at Verona. Now, fortified by the support of King and people, Canning showed himself strong enough to break up the Neo-Holy Alliance of

Austria, Russia and Prussia. The revolt of the Greeks against Turkey gave him an excellent opportunity.

Canning wished to check Russia not by maintaining the power of the Sultan, but by supporting Greece in her claim Canning and to independence as a separate nation. The Greece difficulty arising out of the insurrection of Moldavia and Wallachia had been solved without the intervention of Russia,<sup>1</sup> but the Greek revolt continued in the Morea and the Greeks, who had driven the Turks from the sea, committed many acts of piracy. Canning wished to protect British merchant ships in Eastern waters and realized 'the impossibility of treating as pirates a population of a million souls'. He therefore recognized the Greeks as belligerents on March 25th, 1823, and by this recognition of revolutionaries definitely repudiated the principles of the Neo-Holy Alliance. Alexander I resented the recognition of the Greeks and, as usual, proposed that a Conference of the Powers should be held to settle the Greek question by joint action ; but Canning refused to share in any joint action.

Canning was most anxious to avoid war. He asserted the absolute neutrality of Great Britain. Classical tradition and the association of St. Paul with Athens gained some sympathy for Greece in England, but Canning refused to go to war 'to protect Epaminondas and St. Paul'. He was anxious to prevent Russia from helping Greece against Turkey because he feared that Russia might use the opportunity to conquer Greece and ultimately Turkey, and he knew that a war against the Sultan might have a bad effect upon the Mohammedans in India ; he feared, too, that if war started in the East of Europe it might be difficult to stop it from spreading to the West.

On February 24th, 1825, Ibrahim, the son of Mehemet Ali, landed in the Morea with an army of 5,000 men to support the cause of Turkey. He devastated the country and was supposed to have formed a plan to remove to Egypt those of the inhabitants whose lives he had spared, and to introduce a new population of Egyptian peasants and negroes.

The intervention of Mehemet Ali profoundly affected the

<sup>1</sup> p. 10.

situation. Canning was anxious to avoid military intervention, but the rumour of the impending depopulation of the Morea and the enthusiasm with which Byron espoused the cause of Greece aroused popular opinion in England. A conference held at St. Petersburg between France, Austria, Prussia and Russia failed to deal with the question and Alexander, in disgust, sent a private message to Canning by Madame de Lieven offering to break with Austria and Prussia and to work with England. Alexander I died on December 1st, 1825, and his successor, Nicholas, broke away from the Neo-Holy Alliance. On April 4th, 1826, Wellington signed the Protocol of St. Petersburg by which Great Britain and Russia agreed that Greece should be made an autonomous state subject to the suzerainty of Turkey. On October 7th, 1826, the Sultan accepted the Convention of Ackerman and agreed to evacuate the Principalities and to give Russia the free navigation of the Dardanelles. Canning had won a great triumph. He had broken up the Neo-Holy Alliance and had averted war between Russia and Turkey over the question of the Principalities.

But the problem of Greece was not yet settled. Nicholas was determined to use force if necessary. The Sultan refused

**Canning intervenes in Greece** to accept the Protocol and Canning reluctantly came to the conclusion that Britain must actively co-operate with Russia to prevent the serious danger to the peace of Europe that would ensue if Russia intervened alone. Strong sympathy was felt in France for the Greeks and the government was anxious to take advantage of the breach between Russia and Austria to form an alliance with Russia. Therefore on July 6th, 1827, Great Britain, Russia and France made the Treaty of London. They determined to compel the Sultan, by armed intervention if necessary, to accept the Protocol and to force both Greeks and Turks to make an armistice by any means 'that might suggest themselves to the prudence' of the three Powers. The Greeks accepted the armistice, the Sultan refused. The British, French and Russian fleets were ordered to set up a 'pacific' blockade of Ibrahim's army and were authorized to use any force necessary to compel the Turks to make peace.

Canning died on August 8th, 1827, and his last act showed that although he was a strong opponent of intervention he had been compelled to arrange for military intervention in Greece to check the ambition of Russia. He had broken the Neo-Holy Alliance and by skilful negotiations with France and Russia had accomplished a task which had proved too great for Metternich and his colleagues.

Canning had proved himself as strong an opponent of joint intervention of the Powers as Castlereagh. He had made great efforts to preserve peace while maintaining strict neutrality, and had tried to reconcile the differences which had arisen between Spain and her colonies, Portugal and Brazil, Russia and Turkey and Greece.

But he was 'more insular than European' and wished 'for Europe to read England'. British interests were his

**Results of Canning's Policy** first concern. He protected British shipping by recognizing the Greeks as belligerents; he resented the intervention of France in Spain, but when Subserra proved dangerous to England he insisted on his removal from office, and his last act was to arrange for joint action in Greece. Where British interests were at stake even the principle of intervention had to give way. Canning's policy had restored to Britain the commanding position she had held at the Congress of Vienna and which she had lost after the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle. Although the United States had refused his request for co-operation with regard to the Spanish Colonies and by the Monroe Doctrine had prevented the Powers of Europe from intervening in North or South America, Canning had greatly strengthened British influence in South America where for a time Britain was regarded with more favour than the United States.

## CHAPTER III

### LORD PALMERSTON, 1830-1841

THE foreign policy of Wellington, who succeeded Canning, was anti-liberal and reactionary. He was determined to maintain the integrity of Turkey and was unwilling to enforce the Treaty of London.<sup>1</sup> On October **The Duke of Wellington** 20th, 1827, the united British, French and Russian fleets, commanded by Admiral Codrington, destroyed the Turkish fleet in the Bay of Navarino.<sup>2</sup> William IV sent Codrington a telegram 'Well done, Ned', but in the King's Speech of January 1828 Wellington described the victory as 'an untoward event'. France urged Britain to join Russia in an aggressive policy against Turkey, but Wellington distrusted Russia and suspected Polignac of a desire to form a closer alliance with Russia as a means of strengthening French influence in the Mediterranean. The Sultan, who was nominally at peace with Britain, France and Russia, denounced the Battle of Navarino as 'this revolting outrage', proclaimed a Holy War against infidels in general and Russia in particular, and declared that the Treaty of Ackerman was null and void. The Czar Nicholas I wished to invade Moldavia and Wallachia immediately, and urged France and Britain to force the Dardanelles and threaten Constantinople. Wellington refused to do this and Nicholas, who formally declared war on Turkey on April 26th, 1828, defeated the Turks in the war that followed. Nicholas had already promised to recognize the neutrality of the Mediterranean, but Wellington strongly resented the Treaty of Adrianople

<sup>1</sup> p. 22.

<sup>2</sup> It was rumoured that in the battle the Russian gunners fired on the French ships in revenge for the burning of Moscow.

which ended the war on September 14th, 1829. He thought that Moldavia and Wallachia, which now received their independence, would become dependent on Russia ; that Greece, of which Capo d'Istria, the Czar's Foreign Minister, now became President, would look to Russia for support ; he feared that Russia would use Anapi and Poti, which she secured in Asia Minor, as a base for the extension of Russian influence in the Euphrates Valley and that such extension would ultimately prove dangerous to British India.

Greece was sure to secure her independence, but Wellington determined to limit her territory. He was largely responsible for the Protocol of February 3rd, 1830, which fixed her northern boundary from Thermopylæ to the mouth of the River Achelous. The Greeks strongly resented this arrangement which gave them less territory than they were granted by the Treaty of Adrianople.

Wellington provisionally recognized the election of Louis Philippe on August 7th, 1830, as King of the French although the July Revolution weakened his own position by strengthening the cause of parliamentary reform in England, to which he was strongly opposed.

In 1830 Palmerston became Foreign Secretary in Grey's administration and, except for four months in 1835 when Peel was Prime Minister, held the position until 1841. <sup>Palmerston, a disciple of Canning</sup> Palmerston was a disciple of Canning. He thought that the constitution of Britain was a model which other countries should copy. He aimed at 'getting the affairs of Europe into trim', and was determined to 'stand no nonsense in carrying out his policy'. He strove to maintain peace, but asserted that 'our desire for peace will never lead us to submit to affront either in language or in act'. His methods were often dictatorial and provoked strong resentment on the Continent.

As a 'perfect Canningite' he asserted the principle of non-intervention, but there was some justification for the French diplomatist who defined Palmerston's non-intervention as 'a metaphysical political term which signifies almost the same thing as intervention'. The Tories resented the unpopularity which his methods gained for Britain ; the Whigs

readily supported the minister, who, although a Tory at home, championed the Liberal cause abroad; the country generally was strongly in favour of peace partly because the deplorable state of the finances made the cost of war prohibitive. From 1832 to 1867 the Whig programme was carried out at home, but foreign affairs were of great importance. The period in question was the Age of Palmerston.

Palmerston declared that 'a cordial and good understanding between England and France is essential to the peace and **Great Britain** welfare of Europe', and co-operation between the **and France** two Liberal countries of Europe seemed the obvious policy for both. 'France', he said, 'is the pivot of my foreign policy.'

But the position was difficult. Great Britain thoroughly disapproved of the attempt of France to strengthen her position in the Mediterranean by concluding a close alliance with Mehemet Ali, by attempting to conquer Algiers and by occupying Ancona with French troops in February 1832. If Russia strengthened her influence at Constantinople and France succeeded in Casimir-Périer's plan of making the Mediterranean a French lake the prestige of Britain would be seriously impaired, and France might challenge the position which Great Britain had long held as the champion of the minor states of Europe. While their Liberalism and the feeling that they had common interests against the Eastern Powers formed a bond of union between the two countries, diversity of interest in other matters was bound to lead to serious difficulties.

The Eastern Powers entirely disapproved of the revolt of Belgium against Holland which, unlike the July revolution **The Belgian Revolt** in Paris, was an obvious breach of the arrangements made by the Congress of Vienna. The Czar Nicholas I wished to restore Belgium to King William I of Holland, proposed armed intervention and promised to supply an army of 60,000 men to reduce Belgium. Prussia thought that the example of Belgium might lead to a revolution in her Rhine Provinces and massed troops on the border. Austria feared that the example of Belgium might lead to revolution

in Italy and Hungary. The French Liberals strongly favoured the Belgians and knew that if the Eastern Powers intervened in Belgium the French would insist on supporting Belgium and thus a European war would ensue. Louis Philippe hoped that the French might use the opportunity to recover some of the territory which they had been compelled to cede to Holland and Belgium in 1815 and particularly the Belgian border fortresses of Philippeville and Marienbourg.

Palmerston, like Wellington, regarded the independence of Belgium as essential to the interests of Great Britain ; he thought that while the Eastern Powers would resent any intervention by France alone they would acquiesce in the joint intervention of France and Britain. But he was determined to prevent the French, who were united to the Belgians by ties of religion and language, from securing even 'a cabbage garden or a vineyard' in Belgium. He knew that the Eastern Powers 'will never consent, unless forced to it by a disastrous war, that Belgium shall be united directly or indirectly to France' ; he was prepared resolutely to maintain the traditional British policy which, from the time of Louis XIV, had been directed to the separation of Belgium and France.

The situation was improved by the Polish Insurrection which broke out early in 1831 and diverted the attention of Russia from the problem of Belgium, but France caused difficulties with which Palmerston dealt firmly.

In February 1831 the Belgians offered the crown to the Duc de Nemours, a son of Louis Philippe. But Palmerston would not agree to this arrangement, for it was contrary to the interests of Britain that a Bourbon should occupy the throne of Belgium, and Louis Philippe was compelled, much against his will, to refuse the offer. On June 4th Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, the uncle of Princess Victoria of England, was elected King of the Belgians and the successful establishment of the new kingdom was due largely to his wisdom and discretion.

In January 1831 a Conference of the Powers arranged that Belgium should be independent but that King William should keep the whole of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. But the

Eighteen Articles which were drawn up by the Conference of London in June reserved the question of Luxemburg for further consideration. William therefore invaded Belgium and routed the Belgians at Louvain in August. In response to an appeal from King Leopold a French army invaded Belgium, took Antwerp and compelled the Dutch to withdraw. The French wished to remain in Belgium, but Palmerston declared that 'the French must go out of Belgium or we shall have a general war and a war in a given number of days', and the French were compelled to evacuate the country immediately. Palmerston also insisted that the Belgian frontier fortresses should be dismantled and the destruction of Philippeville and Marienbourg was another blow to French hopes. Palmerston's firmness had ensured the independence of Belgium, maintained the Balance of Power and kept the peace of Europe.

Meanwhile events in Eastern Europe had led to the revival of the aggressive Neo-Holy Alliance and a great victory for Russia. The Eastern Powers strongly resented the growth of Liberalism in France and Britain and the support given by these two Powers to the revolutionary party in Belgium and the Liberals in Spain and Portugal. By the League of Münchenergrätz, 1833, Austria, Prussia and Russia reaffirmed the principles of the Congress of Verona and asserted their right to intervene in any country on the invitation of the legitimate monarch. The armies of Mehemet Ali under Ibrahim had invaded Syria and captured Damascus. On June 14th, 1832, they completely routed the Turks at Konieh in Asia Minor and threatened Constantinople. France favoured Mehemet Ali, Great Britain refused to help Turkey because such a policy would displease France. The Sultan Mahmoud II, on the principle that 'a drowning man will catch at a serpent', secured the help of Russia in July 1833, by the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi, which provided that an offensive and defensive alliance should be concluded between the two countries and that Turkey should close the Dardanelles to foreign warships if Russia asked her to do so. Apparently the treaty of Unkiar Skelessi had made Turkey a kind of Russian Protectorate. Palmerston objected to the

extension of Russian influence in the Near East and both France and Britain protested against the prospective closing of the Dardanelles.

Events in Spain and Portugal gave to Britain and France the opportunity of redressing to some extent the Balance of

**The Quadruple Alliance, 1834** Power in Europe. On the death of Ferdinand VII on September 30th, 1833, his widow Christina

was proclaimed Regent for her infant daughter Queen Isabella and secured the support of the Liberal party. But Don Carlos, the brother of Ferdinand, asserted his claim to the throne and was strongly supported by the party of reaction. In Portugal Dom Miguel continued his opposition to his niece Maria Gloria who maintained the Liberal Charter which her father Dom Pedro had granted in 1826. France and Britain as Liberal Powers determined to support the cause of the two queens against the absolutists in Spain and Portugal, and in April 1834 the Quadruple Alliance was concluded between the Four Powers, which undertook to drive Carlos from Spain and Miguel from Portugal. The Quadruple Alliance was an answer to the Treaty of Münchengrätz. Although it definitely adopted a policy of intervention it completed Canning's policy by uniting the Western Constitutional Powers in defence of Liberal Doctrines against the 'unity'<sup>1</sup> which the Eastern Powers had established at Münchengrätz. Palmerston was delighted and declared that it was 'a capital hit and all my own doing'.

The good understanding between France and Britain, which had never been more than 'a cardboard alliance',<sup>2</sup> did not last long and the relations between the two countries became so strained that at times war appeared imminent. The Liberal party in Spain now split into two factions : the extreme Liberals, or *Progressistas* wished to maintain the authority of the Cortes over the Crown, the *Moderados* held that the control of the Cortes rested with the Crown. The former sided with Britain and the latter with France. In 1836 the *Moderados* secured the removal of Mendizabal, the Minister of Finance and a strong friend to Britain, and compelled the Regent to accept the Constitution of 1812 which

<sup>1</sup> Palmerston.

<sup>2</sup> Wellington.

had proved unworkable. The *Moderados* owed their success largely to the support of Louis Philippe who hoped that circumstances might arise which would justify France in again intervening in Spain as she had done in 1823. But Palmerston firmly refused to allow France to intervene alone and jealousy between the two countries prevented joint intervention. In 1836 Palmerston accused Louis Philippe of breach of faith, 'he has pretty nearly thrown us, the Queen<sup>1</sup> and the Treaty<sup>2</sup> over'. Palmerston's dislike of Louis Philippe and Thiers, which they heartily reciprocated, aggravated the difficulties of the situation. Palmerston's high-handed methods caused great annoyance and Talleyrand justly complained that he had been kept for two or three hours in a waiting-room until the Foreign Minister condescended to grant him an interview.

Thus Britain had lost the friendship of France and become isolated in Europe at a time when the ambition of Mehemet Ali was again threatening the integrity of the

**Mehemet Ali** Turkish Empire. Canning had acquiesced in the separation of Greece from Turkey on the ground of nationality, and Palmerston had shown his sympathy with Greece by extending her boundaries to Arta Volo in 1830 and thus reversing the policy of Wellington. But he now asserted that British policy should endeavour to maintain the Sultan and to uphold the integrity of the Turkish Empire. 'He wished', said Guizot, 'to maintain the Ottoman Empire in order to maintain the equilibrium of Europe.' He thought that if Mehemet Ali became independent he would hamper British trade with India owing to his command of the Red Sea, and if he gained Syria he would hinder the development of British interests in the Euphrates Valley. But France had recently broken the integrity of the Turkish Empire by conquering Algiers and was favourably disposed to Mehemet Ali. French officers had organized the Egyptian army; the presence of an ally of France on the throne of Egypt would strengthen the influence of France in the Levant and limit the advantage Britain derived from the possession of Malta and Gibraltar. Palmerston therefore desired to prevent

<sup>1</sup> Christina.

<sup>2</sup> The Quadruple Alliance.

Mehemet Ali from breaking away from Turkey and to alter the conditions imposed on Turkey at Unkiar Skelessi.

Great Britain now found an ally in an unexpected quarter. The Czar Nicholas I was anxious to break up the alliance <sup>Nicholas I and</sup> between this country and France. At München-<sup>Great Britain</sup> grätz the Eastern Powers had carefully considered the problem of Turkey and had determined to uphold the authority of the Sultan and to preserve the integrity of the Turkish Empire. But a state which owed its continuance to foreign support would be weak and the Czar thought that the weakness of Turkey would be a sufficient guarantee for the maintenance of the interests of Russia. Thus the attitude of the Czar towards Turkey coincided with the traditional policy of Britain, and he showed his good faith by evacuating in 1838 the Principalities which he had occupied during the Russo-Turkish War of 1828-9. Strong feeling had been aroused in Britain by the aggressive policy Russia was following in Central Asia and it was generally believed that Russia had instigated the Shah of Persia to attack Herat. But Nicholas asserted that the sole aim of Russia was to get a fair share of the lucrative trade of Western Asia, and declared that he had just cause of complaint because British agents had intrigued against Russia in the Khanates of Khiva and Bokhara, and a British force had entered Persia. He showed his desire to establish friendly relations with Britain by sending the Czarevitch Alexander (II) on a visit to London and commended his son 'to the honour and loyalty of the English people'. The charming manners of the young visitor made an excellent impression and led to better relations. Through his ambassador, Baron Brunnow, Nicholas agreed to abstain from isolated intervention in Turkey, to allow the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi to lapse, and to allow Russian warships to enter the Dardanelles only with the permission of the other Powers. Palmerston, who feared the designs of France, welcomed the opportunity of an agreement between Britain and Russia, the prospect of which infuriated Thiers, the French Foreign Minister.

Meanwhile the rift between France and Britain had widened. Partly owing to his dislike of Palmerston Louis Philippe was

inclined to come to an understanding with Austria whose relations with Russia had become less cordial.

The growing opposition between France and Britain was increased by a new problem that had arisen in Belgium. The Belgians had refused to surrender to Holland certain parts of Luxemburg and Limburg in accordance with the treaty of 1831. Louis Philippe strongly favoured the claims of Belgium, but Palmerston and the Eastern Powers, including Austria, supported Holland, and Belgium was compelled to give way in May 1839. Thus the position of 1834 was reversed and a combination of Great Britain and the Neo-Holy Alliance proved fatal to the policy of which France approved.

In April 1839 war was renewed between Turkey and Mehemet Ali. On June 24th Ibrahim utterly routed the <sup>Mehemet Ali,</sup> Turkish army at Nessib ; Mahmoud II died on <sup>Turkey and</sup> June 30th and his successor Abdul Mejid was only <sup>the Powers</sup> sixteen years old ; a few days later Achmet Pasha surrendered the Turkish fleet to Mehemet Ali at Alexandria.

The imminent danger to the Turkish Empire compelled the Powers to take immediate action. They took the young Sultan under their protection and warned Mehemet Ali, who hoped to force the weakened Turks to accept his terms, that he must get their sanction for any agreement he might make with the Porte.

Thiers was anxious to strengthen the position of Mehemet Ali and proposed that he should receive Egypt and Syria. Palmerston, although anxious to maintain the integrity of the Turkish Empire as a barrier against possible aggression by Russia, wished to avoid a formal breach with France ; he was willing for Mehemet to receive Egypt as a hereditary possession but refused to agree to the cession of Syria. In May 1840 Thiers entered upon secret negotiations which aimed at establishing the power of Mehemet and strengthening French influence at Constantinople.

The Four Powers, who strongly resented the action of <sup>The Quad-</sup> France, then made, on July 15th, 1840, a Quadruple <sup>rupple Alliance,</sup> Alliance to protect the Sultan and coerce Mehemet. <sup>1840</sup>

If the latter submitted within ten days he was to receive Egypt as a hereditary possession and the adminis-

tration of Southern Syria for life ; if he did not submit within ten days he should be offered only Egypt ; if he did not submit within twenty days he should get nothing. Guizot, the French ambassador in London, did not learn of the treaty until July 17th. He denounced it as a 'mortal affront' to France and Palmerston declared that 'Guizot has looked as cross as the devil for the last few days'. Thiers was furious. He made preparations for war and talked of overthrowing the treaties of 1815 and extending the frontiers of France to the Rhine. But Louis Philippe was warned that if war broke out the other Powers would support England and that he would probably lose his throne. Nicholas offered to send the Russian fleet to help Britain if necessary and Louis Philippe found that discretion was the better part of valour. He refused to read a provocative speech from the throne which Thiers had prepared ; he dismissed Thiers and appointed Guizot as Foreign Minister on October 29th, 1840.

Palmerston refused to be frightened and bade Bulwer, the British chargé d'affaires at Paris, 'convey to Thiers in the most friendly and inoffensive manner possible, that if France throws down the gauntlet we shall not hesitate to pick it up'. But he knew that both the French and British nations did not really desire war and that the threats of France were merely sound and fury.

Operations against Mehemet met with speedy success. Prussia guarded the Rhine against possible aggression by France ; Russia garrisoned Constantinople. A combined British, Austrian and Turkish fleet took Acre on November 2nd, 1840, after three hours' bombardment, and Mehemet was compelled to surrender. In November Admiral Napier induced Mehemet to sign a Convention by which he promised to surrender the Turkish fleet and Napier undertook to persuade the Sultan to let Mehemet keep Egypt. His unauthorized arrangements were approved by the Powers, with some reluctance on the part of Palmerston who would have liked to turn Mehemet Ali out of Egypt.

Guizot and Metternich now proposed that the Powers should guarantee the integrity of Turkey, but Palmerston refused to accept a proposal which seemed to be obviously

aimed at Russia. But the national pride of France, which had been flattered by the recognition of Mehemet <sup>The Straits Act, 1841</sup> as Pasha of Egypt, was further conciliated when she was invited to concur in the Straits Act of July 13th, 1841, which closed the Dardanelles to all war vessels except Turkish.

Palmerston had kept a watchful eye on British interests in Asia. In 1838 he successfully resisted the attempt of Persia <sup>Palmerston and Asia</sup> to secure Herat and thus defended the route to India. In spite of the improvement in the relations between Great Britain and Russia British statesmen were much perturbed owing to the extension of Russian influence in the Middle East and determined to strengthen the North-West Frontier of India by putting Shah Sujah, a friend of this country, on the throne of Afghanistan and by conquering Scinde and the Punjab. In March 1837 a British army expelled Dost Mahomed, a partisan of Russia, from the throne of Afghanistan and made Shah Sujah Amir in his place. A British army of 6,000 men under General Elphinstone was sent to Cabul to support Shah Sujah.

In 1839 Palmerston supported the war against China which had broken out because the Chinese had seized a large quantity of opium which had been smuggled into the country, and treated with great severity the English merchants who were concerned.

Palmerston's policy had aroused considerable opposition in England. There was a strong feeling against alliance <sup>Palmerston's Policy to 1841</sup> with Russia ; the Conservatives strongly resented Russian aggression in the East ; the Liberals regarded Russia as the natural enemy of Liberalism and this feeling was particularly strong in the North of England. The Whigs asserted that Palmerston's high-handed policy had broken the alliance which ought to exist between the two great Liberal Powers. So strong was the opposition that in 1840 Palmerston was able to induce the Cabinet to carry out his policy only by threat of resignation. In 1841 Sir Robert Peel became Prime Minister instead of Lord Melbourne and Aberdeen succeeded Palmerston as Foreign Secretary.

Palmerston's first period at the Foreign Office was successful.

He ' created Belgium, saved Portugal and Spain from absolutism, rescued Turkey from Russia and the highway to India from France '. He had averted the danger of European war. He had established friendly co-operation with Russia which found in the Straits Treaty some compensation for the suppression of the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi. He had embittered the relations between France and Britain, possibly because he did not appreciate the difficulties under which Louis Philippe and his ministers laboured, and in 1840 French journalists could find nothing bad enough to say about ' ce terrible Palmerston '. He vindicated his assertion that ' the interest of Britain is the polar star, the guiding principle of the government ', but there were many who thought that in the Opium War his motto had been ' my country, right or wrong '. But all admired his steady opposition to the Slave Trade and he felt just pride in the fact that in 1830 he had compelled Brazil to give up this inhuman traffic.

## CHAPTER IV

### ABERDEEN, 1841-1846, AND PALMERSTON, 1846-1851

**A**BERDEEN had to deal immediately with a most serious situation which had arisen in Afghanistan. The Afghans strongly resented the interference of Great Britain. In 1841, led by Akbar Khan, the son of Dost Mahommed, they expelled Shah Sujah, murdered Sir Alexander Burnes and Sir William Macnaughten, Scinde and the Punjab the British Agents at Cabul, compelled General Elphinstone to evacuate Cabul and annihilated his army in the Jagdalak Pass. Dr. Brydon was the only Englishman who escaped. The defeat of a British force by native troops in the greatest disaster the British ever suffered in India, dealt a severe blow to British prestige. The Afghans were defeated and Cabul captured by General Pollock in 1842, but the restoration of Dost Mahommed to the throne of Afghanistan seemed a confession that British intervention had failed. In 1843 Sir Charles Napier conquered Scinde. The attack on Scinde, which may have been partly due to the desire to wipe out the disgrace of the Afghan War, was unjustified. It strengthened the North-West Frontier but was described by Napier as 'a very useful and humane piece of rascality'. After Palmerston became Foreign Secretary, the Sikhs, alarmed by the growing power of Britain, invaded British India. In spite of the bravery of the army of the Khasla<sup>1</sup> the Sikhs were defeated in 1846 at Aliwal and Sobraon. But in 1848 war again broke out and the Sikhs were finally defeated at Gujerat by Sir Hugh Gough on February 20th, 1849. The whole of the Punjab was annexed

<sup>1</sup> i.e. the saved ones.

and the Sikhs were reconciled to British rule by the brilliant administration of Henry and John Lawrence, who not only brought prosperity to the Punjab but by their efficiency, wisdom and justice gained the loyal support of the inhabitants and ensured the fidelity of the Sikhs during the Mutiny.

The conquest of the Punjab gave additional security to the North-West Frontier.

Aberdeen was on excellent terms with Guizot ; both were anxious to maintain a good understanding between their respective countries and to keep peace in Europe.  
**Aberdeen and France** Their attempt to settle the thorny question of the Right of Search failed because in 1842 the French Chamber refused to sanction the agreement they had concluded on the ground that it was unduly favourable to Britain. Difficulty arose over the high-handed action of Admiral Dupetit-Thouars who had forced Queen Pomare of Tahiti to acknowledge the sovereignty of France, and imprisoned the Rev. George Pritchard, a missionary and the British Consul, for opposing his action. Aberdeen strongly protested, Guizot disavowed the annexation and compensated Pritchard. In 1844 Aberdeen greatly pleased the French by formally recognizing their occupation of Algiers. The growing good feeling between the two Powers was strengthened by a visit paid by Queen Victoria to Louis Philippe who returned the compliment by spending a short time at Windsor Castle. In 1846 Palmerston visited Paris and so charmed the French by his pleasant manners that 'ce terrible Palmerston' became 'ce cher Lord Palmerston'.

The good understanding which had been established enabled France and Britain jointly to support the constitutional cause in Portugal. The departure of Miguel had greatly weakened the Absolutists, but the Liberal party had split into two. The *Chartists* wished to maintain the Charter of 1826, the *Septembrists* supported the more democratic Charter of 1822. Queen Maria Gloria, who owed her throne to the Quadruple Alliance of 1834, favoured the *Chartists*, but the *Septembrists* proved so powerful that in 1846 Maria Gloria appealed for help from Britain and France.

A Franco-British fleet was sent to Portugal. It put an end to the rising of the *Septembrists*.

The action of the allies appears to be a clear case of intervention in the internal affairs of Portugal ; it succeeded in maintaining the Queen on the throne and saving the country from confusion. If however there was, as was asserted, a real danger that Spain would support the rebels, the intervention might be justified on the ground that Britain was bound by treaty<sup>1</sup> to protect Portugal from foreign invasion.

About the same time France and Britain intervened to stop a war that was being waged between Monte Video and Buenos Aires. In this case the injury the war caused to British commerce may be regarded as a just cause for intervention.

But the good feeling between Great Britain and France did not long continue. On November 10th, 1843, Queen Isabella of Spain had been declared of age and the question of the marriage of the Queen and her sister Maria Louisa was of great importance. Louis Philippe wished his son, the Duc de Montpensier, to marry Maria Louisa ; Great Britain objected to the proposed marriage because if Queen Isabella died unmarried Montpensier would become King of Spain, and the union of the Crowns of France and Spain in one family had always been regarded as contrary to British interests. Louis Philippe agreed that Montpensier should not marry Maria Louisa until Queen Isabella was married and had children to succeed to the Spanish throne. Louis Philippe arranged the marriage of the Queen to her cousin Francis d'Assiz, Duke of Cadiz, a man of infamous character who was unlikely to have any children, and, in spite of the promise he had made to Britain, on October 10th, 1846, the Queen married the Duke of Cadiz and Montpensier married Maria Louisa. There seemed every prospect that in time Montpensier would become King of Spain, but the birth of children to the Queen prevented his succession. The violation of the solemn promises Louis Philippe and Guizot had made and the dishonourable conditions under which the marriage of the Queen of Spain was

<sup>1</sup> p. 7.

concluded caused strong resentment in England, to which Palmerston, who became Foreign Secretary again in 1846, gave vigorous expression. The *entente* was broken off ; strong protests were made by Palmerston who declared that ' Louis Philippe is a man in whom no solid trust can be reposed '. Queen Victoria wrote a letter to the King of the French which Palmerston gleefully described as ' a tickler '. The action of Louis Philippe weakened French influence in Spain. Queen Isabella soon found that she had made a very bad bargain and was so angry with France that she supported the extreme Liberal party and British influence again became supreme in Madrid.

Differences with France weakened the influence of Britain on the Continent and Palmerston could do nothing but make an ineffectual protest when Austria, with the approval of Russia and Prussia, annexed in 1846 the city of Cracow the independence of which had been guaranteed by the Treaty of Vienna in 1815.

Guizot and Louis Philippe, having lost the friendship of Britain, now tried to secure the friendship of Austria. A **Switzerland**, Sonderbund or Secession Union had been formed **1847** in Switzerland by the clerical and reactionary party to assert the independence of each canton which had been guaranteed by the Treaty of Vienna. They were strongly opposed by the National party which was anxious to maintain the federal unity of the country. The National Diet declared war on the Sonderbund which appealed to the Powers to enforce the Treaty of Vienna. Austria, Prussia and France supported the Sonderbund because they thought that their interests would be served if Switzerland was weakened by division. Palmerston declared that the neutrality of Switzerland had been asserted in 1815 and resented the proposed intervention of Austria and France. He did not actually refuse Guizot's proposal that the question should be referred to a Conference of the Powers, but urged the Federal General Dufour to finish the war as soon as possible. Palmerston delayed the negotiations until Dufour had routed the Sonderbund in November 1847, and France and Austria were compelled to accept the position. The action of Louis Philippe

in supporting the Sonderbund enraged the French Liberals and contributed to the Revolution of 1848.

When Europe was convulsed with revolution in 1848 Palmerston adopted the role of a 'passive spectator', and <sup>The Year of Revolutions, 1848</sup> strongly urged Austria, Russia and Prussia to maintain strict neutrality towards France. But

he expressed his personal opinion of some of the people concerned with his usual vigour. Louis Philippe fled from his palace by the back door; Queen Victoria, who now called him 'the dear good King', welcomed him to England, but Palmerston declared that the Revolution was due to 'royal obstinacy and blindness'. He did not intervene when Austria suppressed the revolt of Hungary with utter cruelty, but asserted that 'the Austrians are really the greatest brutes that ever called themselves by the undeserved name of civilized men'. The Austrian General Haynau had ordered Hungarian women to be flogged. When he visited England Messrs. Barclay and Perkins' draymen showed their disapproval of his action by ducking him in a horse-trough. Palmerston held that strong measures were justified because Haynau was 'a great moral criminal', but he thought that the draymen 'instead of striking him ought to have tossed him in a blanket, rolled him in the kennel and then sent him home in a cab, paying his fare'.

But when Russia and Austria threatened to force the Sultan to give up Kossuth and other fugitives who had fled to Constantinople, Palmerston strongly supported the Sultan in his refusal to surrender the refugees. France co-operated with Great Britain and a Franco-British fleet was sent to the Dardanelles to encourage the Sultan. Palmerston urged the Turks 'to keep up their spirits and courage', but warned them that 'they must not swagger about it'. His firm attitude, which he described as 'judicious bottle holding', proved successful and Palmerston rendered most valuable service to Europe in her year of revolutions, by using the power and prestige of Great Britain to prevent a general war.

Disputes arose with Greece owing to the treatment of two British subjects who were living in Athens. Some land belonging to Finlay, the historian, had been taken to extend

the gardens of the King's Palace; an Athenian mob, led by the sons of the Minister of War, had pillaged the house of David Pacifico, a Portuguese Jew who had been born at Gibraltar and was therefore of British nationality. Instead of bringing their case before Greek law courts Finlay and Pacifico appealed directly to Palmerston who ordered Admiral Parker to enforce their claims for damages by blockading the Piraeus on January 15th, 1850. Palmerston's action was most arbitrary and, in Pacifico's case, ridiculous. The latter, a man of no means or position, fraudulently claimed £26,000 damages for the destruction of his property and assessed the value of his drawing-room sofa at £170. Russia protested against the blockade. France offered mediation; the offer was accepted, but the difficulty was settled without reference to France, and the Greeks agreed, under compulsion, to pay 180,000 drachmas as compensation. The French were so annoyed at the cavalier treatment they had received that their ambassador, Drouhyn de Luhys, was withdrawn from London. Palmerston's high-handed action was severely criticized in England and the House of Lords censured him for supporting claims 'doubtful in point of justice or exaggerated in amount'. The action of the Lords was resented by the Commons as an unconstitutional attempt to control the executive, and when the question was raised in the House of Commons Palmerston declared that just as Rome always protected any Roman who could say 'Civis Romanus sum', so 'the watchful eye and the strong arm of England will protect a British subject in whatever land he may be'. 'Civis Romanus' won the day and secured for Palmerston a vote of confidence by a majority of forty-six votes.

Palmerston, rejoicing in his victory, went on his own jaunty way. When Kossuth visited England Palmerston was dissuaded with difficulty from receiving at his own house the rebel against the friendly Empire of Austria. When a deputation called the Emperors of Austria and Russia 'odious and detestable assassins' he did not repudiate the phrase as strongly as a Foreign Secretary ought to repudiate such statements about two friendly monarchs.

Palmerston had rendered great service to Britain and to Europe and had just secured a remarkable personal triumph.

**The Fall of Palmerston, 1841** But his overbearing manner aroused great indignation in Europe. He addressed foreign courts as if he was a headmaster haranguing a Lower Fourth Form. A strong dispatch to Naples was regarded by the Neapolitans as 'one of his usual impertinences'. A dictatorial letter to Spain caused the dismissal of the English ambassador from Madrid in 1848. The Austrians nicknamed him 'Firebrand'. The Germans declared that

If the devil had a son  
He surely must be Palmerston.

He had given great offence to Queen Victoria and his colleagues by refusing to consult them on important points. The Queen had insisted on her right to be consulted and Palmerston had promised to meet her wishes. But he continued, light-heartedly, to 'score off his own bat'. Without previously consulting the Cabinet and the Queen he had expressed to Count Walewski, the French ambassador and a natural son of Napoleon I, his approval of the *coup d'état* by which the Prince President, Louis Napoleon, established his power in Paris in December 1851. He was therefore dismissed from the Foreign Office by Lord John Russell on December 15th. He declared that his dismissal was 'a weak truckling to the hostile intrigues of the Orleans family, Austria, Russia, Saxony and Bavaria and in some degree also, the present Prussian government . . . (who) had for a long time past effectually poisoned the mind of the Queen and Prince<sup>1</sup> against me'. It was really due to his own impetuosity.

<sup>1</sup> The Prince Consort.

## CHAPTER V

### LORD PALMERSTON, 1852-1865

**I**N 1852 Palmerston became Home Secretary in Aberdeen's Ministry ; he was Prime Minister from February 1855 to February 1858 and from June 1859 to his death on October 18th, 1865. Whatever office he held he always took an active interest in Foreign Policy.

British diplomacy appeared at its worst in the negotiations which preceded the Crimean War. The friendship which the Czar Nicholas I had once felt towards Great Britain had been weakened by the strong feeling aroused in England when Russia helped Austria to crush the Hungarian revolt in 1849. Nicholas resented the dispatch of the British and French fleets to the Dardanelles in 1849 (p. 40) and the blockade of the Piraeus in 1850 (p. 41). Palmerston was now definitely hostile to Russia and Lord John Russell declared that 'if we do not stop the Russians on the Danube we shall have to stop them on the Indus'. The maintenance of the integrity of Turkey as a barrier against Russia seemed more than ever essential in the interests of Britain. Stratford de Redcliffe, the British Ambassador at Constantinople, whom the Turks nicknamed 'the Great Eltchi',<sup>1</sup> had never forgiven Nicholas for refusing to accept him as ambassador to the Russian court, and urged the Sultan to resist all attempts to strengthen the influence of Russia over Turkey.

Differences arose between Russia and France as to the custody of the Holy Places in Jerusalem which Napoleon III and the had been granted by the Sultan to the French in Holy Places 1740. As France had neglected to enforce her rights the Greeks had, with the Sultan's permission, taken

<sup>1</sup> i.e. Ambassador.

possession of the Holy Places and repaired them when necessary. Napoleon III reasserted the claims of the French partly through a desire to conciliate his Roman Catholic subjects, and partly because he was anxious by a showy foreign policy to divert the attention of Frenchmen from domestic politics. A mere 'churchwardens' quarrel' was destined to prove one of the causes of the Crimean War. The Emperor of the French had a personal grievance against the Czar who addressed him as 'Mon Ami' and not as 'Mon Frère' as was usual between monarchs. He hoped by a successful war against Russia to consolidate his new Empire and to give to France the 'glory' she desired.

In the beginning of 1853 there seemed little prospect that France would secure the support of Britain if she went to war with Russia, for Englishmen distrusted Napoleon III as much as Nicholas I. In reality Napoleon was anxious to keep peace with Britain, but his policy aroused grave suspicion. Most men agreed with the *Manchester Guardian* that he was 'a very unscrupulous gentleman', and not a few believed that he intended to seize the Channel Isles and attack Belgium, while some feared that he even desired to invade England as the representative of the Pope.

Nicholas now saw that the feeble attempts that had been made to reorganize Turkey by Mahmoud II and Abdul Mejid had failed. Greek Christians were still persecuted by the Turks and Nicholas claimed that the Treaty of Kutchuk-Kainardji, 1774, had given him the right of protecting all Greek Christians in Turkey. Greece had gained independence; Montenegro was practically independent; the Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia were anxious to secure full autonomy. Nicholas honestly believed that the Turkish Empire was breaking up and was anxious to secure the assistance of Britain in dividing the spoil.

In January 1853 the Czar said to Sir Hamilton Seymour, the British ambassador at St. Petersburg, 'We have on our hands a sick man, a very sick man; it will be a great misfortune if, one of these days, he should slip away from us before the necessary arrangements have been made.' He

declared that neither Russia nor any great power must hold Constantinople, suggested that Serbia and Bulgaria should become independent states under Russian protection and that Britain should receive Egypt and Crete. He further warned Britain that 'circumstances, if no previous provision were made, if everything were left to chance, might place one in the position of occupying Constantinople'. Nicholas's overtures to Great Britain were not honest. He apparently made similar proposals to Austria and at the same time tried to make a secret treaty with Turkey. His offer was not accepted partly because Britain feared Russia even when offering gifts of territory, partly because she suspected that Nicholas's intentions towards the 'sick man' were homicidal. But Aberdeen failed to repudiate strongly the Czar's suggestions and Nicholas was left with the impression that he was assured of British neutrality in any crisis that might arise.

On April 19th, 1853, Menschikoff, the Russian ambassador at Constantinople, formally demanded that the Sultan should acknowledge the right of the Greek Church to the custody of the Holy Places and the right of the Czar to protect the Greek Christians in Turkey. The indignation caused by these demands was increased by the insolent manner in which they were presented, but Stratford persuaded the Sultan to grant the demands of the Greek Church and, while denying the right of Russia to protect his Greek subjects, to refer the question to the Great Powers.

Growing distrust of Russia caused Englishmen to adopt a kindlier attitude towards France, now a strong opponent of Russia, and gradually a feeling grew that in the crisis that was obviously impending France and Britain should act together. An attempt was made to minimize the misgovernment of the Turkish Empire. Palmerston asserted in the House of Commons that Turkey 'had made greater progress and improvement than any other country in the same period', and the weakness of the country was used as an argument to support the intervention of Britain on her behalf.

Owing to the refusal of the Sultan to acknowledge the right

of the Czar to intervene in Turkey the Russians under Gort-schakoff crossed the Pruth on June 22nd, 1853, and proceeded to occupy Moldavia and Wallachia.

**The Russians cross the Pruth** The invasion of the Principalities caused great excitement in England ; Palmerston wanted to make the crossing of the Pruth a *casus belli*, but Aberdeen did his utmost to maintain peace and Lord Clarendon, the Foreign Secretary, ordered Stratford to urge Turkey to offer no armed resistance although the invasion of the Principalities would have justified her in declaring war on Russia. Austria strongly protested against the action of the Russians as an interference with the free navigation of the Danube and massed her troops on the Serbian border, but offered mediation. Prussia also protested, partly because she feared that a general war would lead to French aggression on the Rhine, partly because she was unwilling that German policy should be directed by Austria alone.

On the suggestion of Austria, which was sincerely anxious to preserve the peace of Europe, representatives of Britain, France, Austria and Prussia met in Vienna in July 1853 and drew up the 'Vienna Note' which confirmed the treaties of Kutchuk-Kainardji, 1774, and Adrianople, 1829,<sup>1</sup> and accepted a decree of the Sultan which granted toleration to his Christian subjects and gave to Russian consuls the control of the Holy Places. The Czar, on the urgent advice of Prussia, accepted the Note on August 3rd. In spite of the strong resentment he felt owing to the invasion of the Principalities, and although he believed that he could rely upon the assistance of France against Russia, the Sultan accepted the Note under pressure from Stratford, but added an amendment guaranteeing his own authority over his Greek subjects. Austria and Prussia did their best to induce the Czar to accept the Sultan's amendment, but he flatly refused to agree to an alteration made by the Sultan in a Note which had been drawn up by the Powers and accepted by himself. The action of the Sultan was resented by the peace party in England, but a dispatch of Nesselrode, the Russian Foreign Minister, in which he magnified the authority

<sup>1</sup> p. 34.

claimed by Russia over Greek Christians in Turkey, seemed to justify the Sultan's action and Britain and France abandoned the Vienna Note in September 1853.

The withdrawal of Britain and France broke up the Concert of the Powers and alienated Austria and Prussia. They refused Nicholas's suggestion that they should make an alliance with Russia against the Western Powers, but agreed by the Punctuation of Olmütz on October 4th to remain neutral in any war that might ensue provided the Russians did not cross the Danube. Nicholas at the same time tried to keep on good terms with Britain and offered to withdraw the extravagant claim to the right of interference, which Nesselrode had recently asserted, if Britain would again accept the Vienna Note. Aberdeen welcomed the offer and hoped that it would enable him to avoid war, but his hopes were shattered by the action of the Sultan who, on October 5th, 1853, demanded that the Russians should evacuate the Principalities within fifteen days on threat of war. 'The beastly Turks,' said Clarendon in disgust, 'have actually declared war so there is an end of the Olmütz arrangement out of which something might possibly have been made.'

Aberdeen thought that the Czar's latest offer opened the way for further negotiations and wished to warn the Turks that Britain would not give them armed support in England against the Czar; he demanded that hostilities should cease until the new negotiations had been concluded. But a general feeling in favour of war against Russia had spread throughout England. The country was weary of the long peace which had lasted forty years, and Englishmen welcomed the opportunity of warlike adventure. Russia was now regarded as a danger to Europe and Lord John Russell asserted 'we are fighting to maintain the independence of Germans and all Europeans'. The newspapers, with the notable exception of *The Times*, clamoured for war and some declared that Aberdeen was in the pay of Russia. Palmerston and Lord John Russell who regarded war as inevitable, strongly resisted the attempts to maintain peace which Aberdeen continued to make. They compelled Aberdeen to

demand the suspension of hostilities only 'for a reasonable time', and the Turks, hoping to force the hand of Britain, renewed their attacks on the Russian forces within a fortnight.

On October 22nd, 1853, largely owing to the influence of Napoleon III and with the strong approval of Palmerston, **The Dardanelles** the French and British fleets passed the Dardanelles nominally 'to protect the Sultan against a possible Mussulman rising', but really to ensure the integrity of the Turkish Empire. The passage of the Dardanelles was an infringement of the Straits Treaty of 1841<sup>1</sup> but did not involve entry into Russian waters and was not a definite act of war. But it convinced the Turks that they could rely upon the support of the two Western Powers and caused a further divergence of interest between Austria and Prussia, who had taken no part in the movement, and France and Britain. Aberdeen now warned the Czar that Britain felt bound to maintain the integrity of the Turkish Empire although she would not give military support to the Turks if Nicholas would promise not to attack any Turkish ports on the Black Sea. Nicholas refused these terms and felt that war was now inevitable.

On November 30th, 1853, a Russian fleet destroyed a Turkish squadron at Sinope and continued firing on the Turks long after they were able to resist. The action of the Russians in attacking the Turkish ships was perfectly legitimate because Russia and Turkey were at war, but the brutality of the 'Sinope massacre' caused an outbreak of indignation in England, stimulated the demand for war with Russia and induced *The Times* to support the demand. It made a general war almost inevitable, and Stratford joyfully exclaimed 'Thank God! that's war'. It led Napoleon to insist that the allied fleet should enter the Black Sea.

Popular feeling was aggravated by the resignation of Palmerston on December 14th. He was completely at variance with **Resignation and Return of Palmerston** Aberdeen, who still hoped to avert war with Russia, and resented the reluctance of the Prime Minister to send the fleet to the Black Sea. He strongly opposed the new Reform Bill which, with the cordial

<sup>1</sup> p. 34.

support of Lord John Russell, the Ministry proposed to introduce. His resignation was voluntary. But there was a general, though erroneous, belief that he had been hounded out of office owing to the influence of the Prince Consort who, as a German, was thought to be unduly favourable to Russia, and the virulent attacks on her husband for his supposed action caused Queen Victoria great distress.

Aberdeen gave way again. On December 24th Palmerston, finding that the Cabinet sanctioned the advance of the fleet, returned to office, as the leader of the War Party. On January 3rd, 1854, the Allied fleets entered the Black Sea and 'invited' the Russian ships to return to Sebastopol. No similar 'invitation' was given to the Turks and Nicholas naturally refused to adopt a course which would have left the Turks in control of the Black Sea. The entrance to the Black Sea finally committed France and Britain to the Turkish cause.

Aberdeen, still striving for peace, again opened negotiations with Austria, which was willing to join with Britain and France in requiring Russia to evacuate the Principalities. But he was swept away by the force of public opinion which Palmerston said was more powerful 'than the charges of cavalry or the thunder of artillery'. Britain and France, without waiting for an assurance of Austrian support, made a treaty of alliance with Turkey and on March 27th, 1854, formally declared war on Russia. At the moment when the Cabinet decided on war several of the ministers were asleep. But their slumber did not prejudice the question as the final decision had already been made. Aberdeen did not wish to send an ultimatum to Russia until Austria had been consulted but was again overruled by his more impetuous colleagues. Great Britain, wearied of 'the long, long, canker of peace'<sup>1</sup> rejoiced at the prospect of war. Some people lost their heads completely, identified Russia with Anti-Christ and saw in the war the omen of the Second Coming of Christ. More reasonable was the British spirit of fair play which regarded Turkey as a little fellow who must be protected from a great bully. Some hoped that Russia would be defeated and that Hungary and Poland would gain

<sup>1</sup> Tennyson.

their freedom. Bright, maintaining the unpopular cause with his usual courage, asserted that as Turkey had refused and Russia had accepted the first Vienna Note Britain was under no obligation to assist the Sultan, and probably Aberdeen should have resolutely adopted this attitude at first. Later he failed to take advantage of the offer the Czar sent from Olmütz and made a grave error in entering the war without the promise of co-operation from Austria. He, more than any other minister, 'drifted into war'. He was brow-beaten by Palmerston, jockeyed by the Sultan, and finally stampeded into war by the pressure of public opinion.

In August 1854 the Russians, on the demand of Austria, evacuated the Principalities which Austria occupied to protect the navigation of the Danube. Austria had thus secured her main object and, unlike Britain and France, had no desire further to weaken the power of Russia. But in the same month Austria accepted the 'Four Points' drawn up by Britain and France, which provided for the abolition of the Russian Protectorate over the Principalities, the free navigation of the Danube, the revision of the clauses in the treaty of 1841 relating to the Black Sea and the Dardanelles, and the abandonment of the Czar's claim to protect Greek Christians in the Turkish Empire. But Frederick William IV of Prussia greatly admired Nicholas I, detested Napoleon III and objected to an alliance with the infidel Turks. Bismarck urged him to take no part in the war but to concentrate his troops in Silesia as a check to the growing power of Austria. Austria therefore feared that if she went to war Prussia might seize the opportunity to weaken her power in Central Europe, and she did no more than make a defensive alliance with Britain and France against Russia on December 2nd, 1854.

The course of the war led to profound discontent in England. Sir Charles Napier's expedition to the Baltic in August 1854 gained little success. In the Crimea the generalship was weak and the victories were 'soldiers' battles'. Sebastopol, which should have been attacked immediately after the Alma, was skilfully fortified by Todleben and made a gallant defence. The credit

for its capture belonged mainly to the French, and men contrasted their success in taking the Malakoff with the failure of the British to take the Redan. A great outcry followed the revelations made in *The Times* by William Russell, the first modern war correspondent, as to the general conditions of the campaign. Means of transport were bad and many horses died owing to the cold ; the loss of hay in the storm on November 14th, 1854, led to the death of many more, and the soldiers had to carry goods themselves in the depth of winter over atrocious roads. The men suffered terribly owing to the lack of tents, warm clothing and boots. Mismanagement and fraud added to their sufferings. The whole of the badly needed boots which formed one consignment were found to be for the left foot ; dishonest contractors supplied inferior meat and *Punch* declared that 'one man's preserved meat was another man's poison'. The hospitals were overcrowded, ill-equipped and generally inadequate.

Aberdeen was swept out of office by a storm of popular indignation and Palmerston became Prime Minister for the <sup>End of the</sup> first time in February 1855 with Clarendon as <sup>War</sup> Foreign Secretary and Sidney Herbert, 'The Soldiers' Friend', as Secretary for War. General Février turned traitor and Nicholas I died on March 2nd owing to the effect of the winter's cold on a constitution which had been enfeebled by anxiety about the war. The new ministry acted with great vigour. They sent out Florence Nightingale who completely reorganized the hospitals, they provided adequate supplies and generally prosecuted the war with such vigour that Sebastopol fell on September 9th, 1855, and the war was ended by the Treaty of Paris in March 1856.

Napoleon III wished to continue the war in order to establish the independence of Poland. He hoped that in the general confusion which would follow France might extend her borders towards the Rhine. Palmerston absolutely refused to consider these suggestions. Austria threatened to support the Allies unless Russia accepted the Four Points ; Prussia advised the Czar to make peace.

The Peace Treaty of Paris neutralized the Black Sea ;

The Peace Treaty of Paris ensured freedom of navigation on the Danube and thus gave Austria what she wanted ; guaranteed the integrity of Turkey and thus accepted a fundamental principle of British policy ; compelled the Sultan to promise to give better treatment to his Christian subjects ; regulated maritime war by decreeing the abolition of privateering and by asserting that neutral ships should make neutral cargoes except in case of contraband of war.

Apparently Britain had succeeded in establishing a permanent check on the power of Russia and her successful intervention greatly strengthened her prestige on the Continent, while the sad experience of the Crimean War led British statesmen for sixty years to adopt a policy of peace. But the advantages gained proved only temporary. On September 29th, 1870, Russia denounced the Black Sea clauses of the Treaty of Paris. The Crimean War, which was fought to maintain the integrity of Turkey, promoted the formation of independent Balkan States. The union of Moldavia and Wallachia into Roumania, which took place in December 1861, proved a further step in the disintegration of Turkey, although the provinces that had broken away have not facilitated but retarded the expansion of Russia to the southwest and 'Russia is no nearer Constantinople than she was in 1856'. Russia was prevented from extending southwards and therefore adopted a more active policy in the Middle East ; grave anxiety for the safety of India was the penalty that Great Britain had to pay for maintaining the cause of Turkey against Russia in the Crimea War.

Austria suffered most from the Crimean War. She had alienated Russia by her refusal to co-operate and still more by the threat of armed opposition in 1855. She treated Prussia with such contempt at Paris that close alliance between the two countries was no longer possible. Austria was thus isolated and her isolation contributed to her defeat by Prussia in 1866 and, by strengthening the Cause of Sardinia, which had joined the allies and rendered signal service at the battle of the Tchernaya, facilitated the enfranchisement of Italy from Austrian rule.

Disraeli declared that the Crimean War was 'just but

unnecessary'. Salisbury asserted that 'we put all our money on the wrong horse'. Undoubtedly it was a great mistake for which not only the ministers but practically the whole nation must share the blame.

The result of the Crimean War increased the popularity of Palmerston whose methods, however offensive to the English court and foreign diplomatists, had won the hearts of his countrymen. Englishmen were already proud of a man who would 'stand no nonsense' from the Powers of Europe, and who had shown his determination to assert the rights of any British subject even when a British subject was as disreputable as Don Pacifico. The manner in which he had brought England through the dark winter of 1854, and effected what was thought to be a satisfactory ending to the Crimean War, finally established his position as the idol of the English people who worshipped him as John Bull incarnate.

In October 1856, the crew of the lorcha<sup>1</sup> *Arrow* was arrested by a Chinese mandarin on a charge of piracy. The *Arrow* was owned by a Chinaman, manned by a Chinese crew, commanded by a British master. She had been registered as a British vessel and still flew the British flag, although she was not entitled to do this as her period of registration had expired. The Chief Superintendent of Trade at Hong Kong, Sir John Bowring, demanded the release of the prisoners and an apology from the Chinese. Commissioner Yeh, the Governor of Canton, said, correctly, that the *Arrow* was no longer a British vessel, gave up the prisoners but refused to apologize or to accede to Bowring's demand that the Treaty of Nanking, 1841, which gave British traders access to Hong Kong should be carried out. On Yeh's refusal Bowring ordered Sir Michael Seymour to bombard Canton. Yeh now offered a reward for the heads of 'English dogs'. Palmerston strongly supported Bowring on the ground that the British flag had been insulted and that British subjects had been unjustly imprisoned. He declared that 'an insolent barbarian wielding authority at Canton, had violated the British flag, broken treaties and planned the destruction of British subjects'. But Bowring's action was declared to be

<sup>1</sup> A lorcha was a ship used in local Chinese trade.

illegal and a vote of censure was carried in the Commons against the Government. Palmerston therefore dissolved Parliament in March 1857.

The election of 1858 showed that Palmerston's personal popularity was as great as ever. He was returned to office **The Orsini Bombs** by a large majority and was practically a dictator for the rest of his life. On July 14th, 1858, three bombs were thrown at Napoleon III by Orsini, an Italian who thought that the Emperor was preventing the union of Italy; they killed ten people and wounded one hundred and fifty-six outside the Opera House in Paris. The bombs had been made in Birmingham and Orsini had spent some time in England. Walewski, Napoleon's Foreign Minister, protested against the asylum given in England to foreign anarchists and asked 'is hospitality due to assassins?' Some very excited French colonels wrote wild letters advocating an attack on London, 'the infamous haunt in which machinations so infernal were hatched', and the letters were published in the official *Moniteur*. Palmerston therefore introduced the Conspiracy to Murder Bill which was a reasonable attempt to limit the abuse of asylum in England by foreign assassins. But English feeling had been raised by the colonels' letters, the Bill was regarded as a cowardly concession to French dictation and was rejected. Palmerston therefore resigned but was again returned to power and in June 1859 entered on his last and least satisfactory period of office.

By this time Palmerston had become very suspicious of Napoleon III. 'The Emperor's mind,' he declared, 'seems growing distrust of Napoleon III as full of schemes as a warren is full of rabbits', and he suspected that the Emperor was determined to avenge the humiliations which Britain had inflicted upon France in 1815 and later years.

The Orsini bombs stirred Napoleon to action and his policy towards Italy vitally affected his relations with England. The Italians undertook to cede Nice and Savoy to France; and Napoleon promised that Italy should be 'freed from the Alps to the Adriatic' and helped the Sardinians to defeat the Austrians at Magenta and Solferino in June 1859. He hoped that Italy would become a federation of states under the

patronage of France, but he saw that the country was tending to become a United Kingdom which would probably become a rival and not a dependency of France. Partly for this reason in July 1859, without consulting the Italians, he made the Treaty of Villafranca with Austria in which, in defiance of his previous promise, he agreed that Austria should retain Venetia. The Treaty of Villafranca was due partly to Napoleon's fear of Prussia which was massing troops on the Rhine and he hoped, by leaving Austria in Venetia, to secure her help if war broke out between France and Prussia. It was regarded as an act of treachery in Italy and caused such resentment in England that for some time British Foreign Policy was inspired very largely by fear and distrust of France. Palmerston was compelled to acquiesce in the cession to France of Nice and Savoy, but declared that the British fleet would intervene if France tried to secure Genoa as well. Napoleon desired to secure the Palatinate as a base for an attack on Prussia, and many believed that he even meditated a descent on the South Coast of England. A great increase in the French navy and the new fortifications that were built at Cherbourg aroused grave suspicion. Palmerston said that 'all that we want is that France should be content with what she is, and should not take up the schemes and policy of the first Napoleon'. He took active measures to meet the crisis. 'Form ! riflemen, form !' sang Tennyson ; 'the National Volunteer Association for the Practice of Rifle Shooting' was formed in May 1859, and in June 1860 Queen Victoria reviewed eighteen thousand volunteers in Hyde Park. Palmerston strengthened the fortifications of Portsmouth, Plymouth, Chatham and Cork in view of the possible danger from France. For a time war seemed probable, but one afternoon as Palmerston was driving to the House of Commons he gave a lift to Count Flahault, the French ambassador, and a short conversation in the Prime Minister's carriage established much more friendly relations. But mutual suspicion prevented cordial co-operation between France and Britain at a time when such co-operation was highly necessary to counteract the designs of Russia and Prussia.

Poland again rebelled against Russia in 1863. Napoleon

protested against the attempt of Russia to secure the whole of Poland in defiance of the Congress of Vienna, and

**Poland** proposed that a Congress of the Powers should meet at Paris to deal with the question. Palmerston refused to accept the proposal and his refusal greatly irritated Napoleon. Lord John Russell, the British Foreign Secretary, asserted his determination to enforce the treaties of 1815 and expressed strong sympathy for the Poles, who were led to believe that Britain would intervene on their behalf. But Bismarck made an agreement with Alexander II and agreed to concentrate four army corps on the Polish frontier to prevent help being sent to the Poles. Russell sent no assistance to the Poles and Alexander, relying on the support of Prussia, annexed the whole of Poland in spite of utterly ineffectual protests from France, Britain and Austria. Palmerston's futile policy led to the understanding between Russia and Prussia which was profoundly to affect European diplomacy for thirty years.

Palmerston strongly resented the attempt of Prussia to secure Schleswig-Holstein and by expressing strong sympathy

**Schleswig-Holstein** with the Danes, annoyed Queen Victoria, who

favoured the Prussian cause, and made the Danes believe that Britain would come to their help. He declared that if people tried to interfere with Denmark 'those who made the attempt would find in the result, that it was not Denmark alone with which they had to contend'. Popular sympathy was on the side of Denmark and was increased by the charming personality of Princess Alexandra of Denmark, who received an enthusiastic welcome in London when she came to marry the Prince of Wales in March 1863. Napoleon III was angry because Palmerston had not accepted his suggestion that a European Congress should be held to deal with the problems of the time and refused to co-operate with Britain in defence of Denmark. Russia, mindful of the support Prussia had given her in 1863, favoured Bismarck's policy. Britain could do nothing but make a strong protest, of which Bismarck took no notice. Again one of the smaller nations of Europe thought that Britain had left her in the lurch, and the assertion that Palmerston's later policy was

one of 'senseless and spiritless menaces' was certainly true of his attitude towards Poland and Denmark.

Palmerston had warned Metternich in 1847 that unless Italy received some measure of constitutional government the peace of Italy and possibly of Europe would be endangered. But Austria persisted in a policy of repression and the Italians rose against their foreign masters.

The Queen and Prince Albert hoped that Austria would reassert her power over Italy. But Englishmen regarded with strong sympathy the struggle for Italian unity which was a Liberal and Nationalist movement. Palmerston now took his stand on the principle 'that no force should be employed for the purpose of imposing upon the people of Italy any form of government or constitution; that is to say, that the people of Italy, and especially of Central Italy, should be left free to determine their own condition of political existence'. His fear that Napoleon III would make French influence predominant in Italy formed an additional reason for desiring the success of Victor Emmanuel and Cavour. Palmerston maintained a policy of benevolent neutrality towards Italy and steadily refused to give official support to her cause, although on one occasion, when the Sardinians were found to be using arms that had been manufactured at Woolwich Arsenal, he was compelled to apologize to Austria. He refused to agree to a proposal of the French government that British and French warships should prevent Garibaldi and his 'thousand red shirts' from attacking Sicily. He warned Francis II of Naples that he could maintain his position only by granting measures of reform and the King lost his throne because he neglected Palmerston's advice. As a result of his policy Italy was able to work out her own salvation, and by 'keeping the ring' Palmerston had rendered real service to the cause of Italian unity.

The outbreak of the American Civil War in 1861 led to considerable difference of opinion in England. Some rejoiced that the rebel states were threatened with destruction. Business men preferred the Free Trade policy of the Southern States, who depended largely on England for

their machinery, to the Protectionist policy of the Northerners who tried to stimulate their growing manufactures by a system of tariffs. The strong support given by Bright to the cause of Abolition won many supporters for the Federals in the North of England in spite of the grave injury that the war inflicted on the cotton trade of Lancashire.

In the American Civil War Palmerston privately favoured the South but officially maintained strict neutrality. But the war caused much bad feeling between Great Britain and the United States. The Northerners objected to Palmerston's action in recognizing the Confederates as belligerents and declared that such recognition should not have been granted to rebels. They strongly resented an injudicious speech made by Gladstone who, in October 1862, declared that 'Jefferson Davis had made an army, had made a navy, and, what was more, had made a nation'. The Southerners who held that 'Cotton is King', deplored the recognition given by Great Britain to the blockade which crippled their trade.

On November 6th, 1862, the Northerners seized Mason and Slidell, two Confederate envoys who were sailing on the British mail steamer *Trent* to plead their cause in Europe. Mason and Slidell were travelling as ordinary passengers and were not on active military or naval service. Their arrest was a denial of the obvious rights of neutral governments to receive envoys from belligerents. This grave breach of international law led Palmerston promptly to send the Guards to Canada and he approved of a strong dispatch drawn up by Lord John Russell which would probably have led to war between Great Britain and the United States if it had been presented at Washington. Fortunately the dispatch was submitted for the Queen's approval and by the advice of the Prince Consort the wording was so altered that it gave no offence. The new paragraph which saved the situation ran as follows :

'Her Majesty's Government, bearing in mind the friendly relations which have long subsisted between Great Britain and the United States, are willing to believe that the United States naval officer who committed this aggression was not

acting in compliance with any authority from his Government, or that if he conceived himself to be so authorized, he greatly misunderstood the instructions which he had received.'

Lord Lyons, a most tactful ambassador, assured Seward, the American Secretary of State, that 'I will do anything I can to make it easy for you', and the Northerners, although with much reluctance, released their prisoners.

'We give the critturs back John,  
'Cos Abram<sup>1</sup> thought 'twas right.  
It warn't your bullying clack, John,  
Provoking us to fight.'

The Northerners were entirely in the wrong and unreasonably resented the action of Britain; but Palmerston's refusal to accept Mason and Slidell as the official representatives of the Confederates because they were not an independent state aroused bitter feelings in the South.

On July 26th, 1862, the United States' ambassador reported to Lord John Russell that a fast cruiser, the *Alabama*, was being built for the Southerners at Birkenhead. The *'Alabama'* Lord John at once consulted Sir Robert Collier, the counsel to the Admiralty, who said that the construction of the *Alabama* was a glaring infringement of the Foreign Enlistment Act, and advised that the vessel should be prevented from sailing. Unfortunately, owing to Sir Robert's illness, his opinion was not delivered until several days had elapsed. On receipt of the opinion Lord John sent orders that the *Alabama* should be detained in the Mersey. But she had already sailed, nominally for a pleasure cruise with a number of ladies on board. The ladies were landed at a convenient port and the *Alabama*, a British-built ship, carrying guns made in England, with a crew largely British and including many men from the British Naval Reserve, sailed on a privateering expedition and in two years captured seventy-six Northern vessels. In 1863 two iron rams were being constructed in English shipyards to relieve the blockade which the Northerners had established over the Southern Ports. His earlier protests having produced little effect

<sup>1</sup> Abraham Lincoln.

Charles F. Adams, the representative of the United States in London, informed Lord John Russell on September 5th that one of the vessels was about to sail from Liverpool, and added 'it would be superfluous for me to point out to your Lordship that this is war'. Lord John then prevented the vessels from leaving England.

Palmerston died on October 18th, 1865. He had done much to maintain the doctrines of Canning. He asserted *Palmerston's Policy* that Britain 'ought to maintain peace and to count for something in the transactions of the world'. He strongly approved of the Crimean War but, with this exception, kept Britain out of war in Europe from 1830 to 1865. To him was largely due the fact that the Revolutions which convulsed the Continent in 1848 did not lead to a general European War. He steadily opposed Russia, believing that the extension of Russia in Eastern Europe and Central Asia was dangerous to British interests. He supported the integrity of Turkey as a check on Russia and professed to believe that the internal administration of the Empire was not as corrupt as was generally asserted. He several times brought Britain to the verge of war with France but succeeded in averting actual hostilities between the two countries. He showed great vigour in asserting the rights of British subjects, even of an undesirable like Don Pacifico. But he failed to appreciate the growing importance of Prussia, and the ineffectiveness of the European policy of Britain from 1859 onwards was partly due to the fact that in Bismarck he found a superior in the game of bluff which in earlier years he had played with great success. His determined opposition to the Slave Trade, the evils of which he sensibly diminished, is greatly to his credit.

His early policy strengthened British influence, but his disregard of the rights and feelings of other nations and his arbitrary methods lowered the tone of British politics. He adopted the grand manner but had no grand armies to support it, and Earl Granville declared that he had 'wasted the strength derived by England from the great war<sup>1</sup> by his brag'. In 1864 Derby asserted that owing to Palmerston's recent policy

<sup>1</sup> Against Napoleon.

of ' meddle and muddle ' Britain had not a friend in Europe.  
' Its menaces are disregarded, its magniloquent language is  
ridiculed and its remonstrances are treated with contemptuous  
indifference.'

## CHAPTER VI

### THE BEGINNING OF SPLENDID ISOLATION

THE death of Palmerston meant the end of the Palmerstonian tradition of an aggressive Foreign Policy. Gladstone was anxious to maintain the Concert of Europe as a means of ensuring peace : 'I do not believe', he wrote in 1869, 'that England ever will or can be unfaithful to her great tradition, or can forswear her interest in the common transactions and the general interests of Europe.' But he was preoccupied with domestic legislation and determined to avoid needless and entangling alliances. During his first administration 1868-74 Britain no longer gave a lead to Europe ; her intercourse with foreign powers was generally limited to cases in which she was directly concerned.

British statesmen still failed to appreciate the importance of the growing power of Prussia, and although Disraeli had asserted in 1866 that Britain 'is no longer a mere European power ; she is the metropolis of a great maritime empire', Imperialism was not to become practical politics for many years.

But British interests were so extensive that Granville, who became Foreign Secretary on the death of Clarendon in 1870, had many difficult problems to solve.

Bismarck desired to weld Northern and Southern Germany into one state in which Prussia, which had gained power and prestige by her defeat of Austria in 1866, would be predominant. But his policy towards Denmark had aroused strong feeling in England and many, and notably Queen Victoria, thought that Britain should have helped Austria in the recent war. A declaration of war by Prussia

on France would have intensified the suspicion that Britain now felt of Bismarck's designs.

Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, a relative of William I of Prussia, had withdrawn his acceptance of the crown of Spain, largely owing to the opposition France declares war, of the French who thought that his accession 1870 would mean the establishment of Prussian influence in Spain, and declared that France would not permit 'a foreign power' to place 'one of its princes on the throne of Charles V'. Benedetti, the French Ambassador to Prussia,

was instructed to ask King William, who was taking the waters at Ems, to promise that he would never allow a Hohenzollern to become a candidate for the throne of Spain. The King naturally refused this unreasonable request and sent a telegram from Ems to Bismarck, who was at Berlin, giving an account of the interview. Bismarck altered the wording of the 'Ems telegram' in such a way as to turn a courteous message into an insult to France. The French were so furious that the Legislature, in spite of Thiers' assertion that war would be 'supremely imprudent', decided on July 14th, 1870, to declare war on Prussia. Thus Bismarck had cleverly contrived that the actual declaration of the war on which he had resolved should come from France. The odium which France thus incurred was increased by the publication in *The Times* of July 25th of a copy of a draft treaty in Benedetti's handwriting demanding that Prussia should allow France to take Luxembourg and help her to conquer Belgium as the price of the neutrality of France in the Austro-Prussian War. The general feeling of Britain was expressed by Gladstone who deplored the 'deep culpability' of France.

The interests of Britain required that Belgium should be a neutral country, for the occupation of that country by Neutrality of either France or Germany would seriously endanger Great Britain the safety of England. The threat to Belgium which was contained in Benedetti's draft led Britain to make treaties with France and Prussia by which each of the belligerents undertook to respect the neutrality of Belgium; if either France or Germany attacked Belgium Britain would

give military support to the other. The Government maintained strict neutrality in the war and thus disappointed both the combatants, for France had hoped for the support of her old ally in the Crimean War and objected to the policy of Britain which limited the area of the war and prevented France from securing the help of Austria ; while Bismarck asserted, quite incorrectly, that Britain could have stopped the war by putting pressure on France. Granville had in vain tried to avert the war by friendly mediation. He now formed a League of Neutrals to prevent the extension of the war and thus rendered real service to Europe. But the policy of Great Britain really proved helpful to Bismarck. His understanding with Russia protected his rear. The League of Neutrals enabled him to concentrate his attention on France without the intervention of any other European Power.

The disasters which overwhelmed France changed the hostility with which Britain had regarded her into sincere **Great Britain** sympathy, and the feeling of this country strongly helps France, condemned the cession of Alsace and Lorraine.  
1871 and  
1875

The ministry maintained a correct attitude and abstained from criticizing this clause of the Treaty of Frankfort although every member objected to it strongly. But by friendly representations Granville secured the reduction of the war indemnity which was imposed on France from six to five milliards of francs.

In spite of the crushing victory of Germany Bismarck felt that 'we must soon expect a new attack . . . the French nation will never forgive their defeat'. France recovered from the war with extraordinary rapidity. The war indemnity was paid off two years earlier than Bismarck had desired or expected. The French army was reorganized in 1872 and Germany was so alarmed by a law passed in 1875 to increase the army that the *Berlin Post* published a sensational article headed 'War in Sight' ; it seemed likely that Germany would again attack France. The danger was averted owing to strong protests made by Alexander II of Russia to the German Emperor during a visit to Berlin, and by a letter which Queen Victoria wrote to the Kaiser William I urging him to prevent a second Franco-German War. William had

no desire for war and the efforts of the Czar and the Queen of England proved successful.

The Franco-German War profoundly affected European politics. It was the direct cause of the Armed Peace which Effects of the inevitably led to the Great War. President Wilson said that 'The wrong done to France by Franco-German War Prussia in 1871 in the matter of Alsace and Lorraine unsettled the peace of the world for nearly fifty years'. After the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine 'all Europe breathed a harsher air'.<sup>1</sup> France never forgave Prussia and the desire for 'revanche' became an obsession. The fear of the growing power of France and the desire to preserve the German Empire which had been established by war, led Germany to maintain a large army and, in 1873, to unite with Russia and Austria in the League of the Three Emperors by which the three countries bound themselves to preserve peace and to maintain the existing situation. The forces of reaction had become more powerful. Henceforth Europe was an armed camp; race war and class war were to determine the course of history. General war was several times averted by the return to the old system of Congresses, but the political atmosphere was poisoned by the fear of war; the increase in armaments, whether for offence or defence, laid heavy burdens on the people of Europe; the system of alliances which Bismarck inaugurated in 1873 was destined, when the inevitable war broke out, to make every great nation a participant.

Gladstone's government adopted a policy of splendid isolation. It took no part in the remaking of Europe but Russia and attempted to assert the important principle of the Black Sea the sanctity of treaties made by a Congress of Powers. In 1870 Russia took advantage of the preoccupation of France and Germany to denounce the clauses of the Peace of Paris which declared that the Black Sea was neutral and its waters were open to all merchant vessels but closed to all warships. Bismarck secretly supported the denunciation in return for the help Russia had given to Germany by protecting her rear in the recent war. Britain strongly protested

<sup>1</sup> Professor Trevelyan.

against the action of Russia and maintained that no clause of a treaty could be abrogated without the consent of all the parties concerned. Owing to Granville's efforts the question was referred to a Conference of the Powers which met in London. The Conference declared that no European treaty could be modified by the action of only one party, and then met the wishes of Russia by cancelling the neutralization of the Black Sea. The Conference thus asserted the principle of the sanctity of treaties and condoned the action of Russia who had rejected that principle. The Liberals claimed that they had attained their object, but the practical results of the Conference were regarded as a failure for British diplomacy. The extension of Russian influence in Turkestan, and particularly the acquisition of Khiva in 1873, seemed to threaten the road to India, and the resentment caused by Granville's surrender in 1871 was aggravated by growing suspicion of the designs of Russia in Central Asia.

The action of the Government in the *Alabama* case seemed to many to involve the sacrifice of national interests. Serious

**The  
'Alabama'  
Settlement** differences, which at one time seemed likely to lead to war, had arisen between Britain and the United States. The latter claimed £10,000,000 damages for injury done to Northern shipping by the *Alabama* and two other Confederate vessels which had been built in England, and for indirect losses due to the prolongation of the war and loss of trade. Britain claimed damages from the United States for a raid made by twelve hundred Fenians who, in May 1866, had crossed the Niagara River and seized Fort Erie in Canada. Britain denied the right of Americans to fish off the coast of British North America. Commissioners were sent to Washington to deal with the questions and Lord de Grey frankly expressed the regret of the British Government for failure to detain the *Alabama* and other vessels in British ports and for the losses they had inflicted on Northern shipping. The Americans suggested that their claims should be submitted to an impartial tribunal but that, before the tribunal met, the British Commissioners should accept the principles that a neutral government was bound to 'prevent the equipping within its jurisdiction of any vessel intended

to carry on war against a Power with which it is at peace', and to use its naval forces to arrest and detain any such vessels which had actually sailed. The Commissioners felt that the acceptance of these principles would prejudge the issue, but, in order to avoid a rupture of negotiations, agreed to accept the principles as prospective while denying that they were in force when the *Alabama* left England in 1862. By the Treaty of Washington, 1871, the points at issue were referred to a court of Arbitration which was to sit at Geneva and to consist of five members nominated by Great Britain, the United States, Brazil, Italy and Switzerland. The British dropped the claim for damages for the Fenian raid and the American Government withdrew the claims which it had advanced for 'indirect losses'. The Tribunal awarded £3,250,000 to the United States for damages done by the *Alabama* and other cruisers and gave American fishermen the right to fish off the coast of British North America.

The Government had averted war and had set a valuable precedent by accepting arbitration as a means of settling disputes between nations. But strong feeling was aroused in England by the new principles as to the duties of nations in war; the rights granted to American fishermen were regarded as unfair to Canadians; it was felt that the claim for damages for the Fenian raid ought to have been pressed and the decision of the arbitrators on the *Alabama* case was thought to be unjust to Britain.

In regard both to Russia and the United States the Government was supposed to have failed to maintain British interests. Granville was a man of great tact and charming manners, but he lacked the strength of Clarendon and his methods suffered by comparison with Palmerston's generally successful aggression. The feeling that British prestige had been impaired by the policy of Splendid Isolation was one of the reasons for the defeat of the Liberals in the election of 1874.

## CHAPTER VII

### DISRAELI'S SECOND MINISTRY, 1874-1880

**T**HE limited but sound domestic policy which occupied the first three years of Disraeli's Second Ministry (1874-80) was welcomed as a relief from the reformation in a flood which Gladstone had effected. Disraeli defined British Foreign Policy as 'England's home affairs <sup>Disraeli and British Foreign Policy</sup> in foreign parts'. Since 1871 Germany, Austria and Prussia had decided the affairs of Europe, but after 1874 Disraeli's vigorous action made Britain a power in the Councils of Europe without committing the country to alliance with any foreign nation. His recognition of the importance of colonial development marks the beginning of British Imperialism. On going to Berlin in 1878 he declared that 'Our duty at this critical moment is to preserve the Empire of Britain'. Britons learned to value their colonies more highly and sought to extend them. France and Germany adopted an active colonial policy and found in the British Empire a serious obstacle to their designs. The problem of adjusting the claims of the three great Colonizing Powers was henceforth destined to form an integral part of British Foreign Policy.

Under the Khedive Ismail, a reckless spendthrift, the finances of Egypt had become hopelessly embarrassed. In 1875 Ismail offered to sell to the British Government 176,602 out of the total of 400,000 shares in the Suez Canal. The Foreign Secretary, Lord Derby, opposed the purchase, but Disraeli insisted on buying the shares for about £4,000,000 and the money was paid, in the first instance, not out of the public funds but by Messrs. Rothschild and other bankers. By this purchase Britain

secured greater control of the road to India and was committed to an active interest in the government of Egypt. A considerable number of Egyptian bonds had been purchased by French investors and to protect their interests France felt bound to intervene. In 1877 Ismail was compelled to establish the Caisse de la Dette Publique to which the general control of the finances of Egypt was entrusted, and which included four Commissioners appointed by Great Britain, France, Austro-Hungary and Italy. Following a suggestion by Waddington, the French Foreign Minister, Ismail was deposed by the Sultan in 1878 and succeeded by his son Tewfik ; M. de Blignières and Evelyn Baring<sup>1</sup> were appointed Controllers-General of the Finances. Egypt was now subject to the Dual Control of Great Britain and France. Lord Salisbury, who succeeded Derby as Foreign Secretary in 1878, assented to the arrangement with some reluctance and felt that Britain was being made 'to act as sheriff's officer' for the French bondholders.

In 1875 Bosnia and Herzegovina revolted against the Sultan owing to the cruelty of Turkish tax collectors and Europe again had to deal with the troublesome Eastern Question. Turkey had not carried out the reforms prescribed by the Treaty of Paris ; her Christian subjects were cruelly persecuted and the country was on the verge of bankruptcy. Russia still regarded herself as the protector of the Christian subjects of the Sultan and had put herself at the head of the Pan-Slav movement which appealed strongly to the Balkan Slavs. Alexander II hoped that by supporting the extension of Pan-Slavism in the Balkans he might regain the influence Russia had lost in the Crimean War. He desired to expel the Turks from Europe and to secure Constantinople. Disraeli was determined to 'maintain the Empire of England' which, he thought, would be endangered by the growing power of Russia. In spite of the failure of Turkey to fulfil her promises Disraeli, following the example of Palmerston and not of Canning, wished to maintain the integrity of Turkey as a barrier to the extension of Russia. He pro-

**The Balkan  
Problem,  
1875-6**

<sup>1</sup> Lord Cromer.

foundly distrusted the Czar and his mind was probably influenced by the cruel persecution to which Jews were subjected in Russia. He realized too that Russia might prove a barrier to his new imperial policy. But he failed to realize that the hold of Turkey on the Balkan states was growing weaker and that, if the states were made independent, the feeling of chronic revolt against Turkey, which continually menaced the peace of Europe, would disappear. Austria was already casting greedy eyes on Bosnia and Herzegovina ; she strongly opposed the Pan-Slav movement, the success of which would involve the disruption of her unwieldy Empire ; she objected to the extension of Russian influence in the Balkans and particularly on the Lower Danube. Bismarck said that the Eastern Question was not 'worth the bones of a Pomeranian grenadier' ; he tried to play the part of the 'honest broker' between Russia and Austria, both of whom were in alliance with Germany. But he objected to the acquisition of Constantinople by Russia and to the extension of Russian influence in the Danube valley, either of which would seriously interfere with German ambitions in the Near East. All the Powers were anxious to maintain peace and in December 1875 their efforts resulted in the revival of the Concert of Europe. Since the Alliance of Prussia, Great Britain, Austria, Russia and France in 1841 a Conference of the Powers had met together only in 1867 when they had guaranteed the independence and neutrality of Luxemburg. Russia, Germany and Austria now issued the Andrassy Note which demanded that the Christian subjects of the Sultan should have equal rights with the Mohammedans, and that mixed assemblies of Christians and Mohammedans should be set up to control the administration and reform abuses. Disraeli was disinclined to accept the Note because Great Britain had not been consulted. After some delay Disraeli accepted the Note in January 1876, but his hesitation had offended Russia and perhaps led the Turks to hope for the support of Britain. The Sultan accepted the Note on February 11th, but Bosnia and Herzegovina refused to lay down their arms.

The murder of the French and German consuls by a mob

**The Berlin Memorandum, May 1876** at Salonika on May 6th, 1876, caused natural indignation in France and Germany. On May 13th Germany, Russia and Austria issued the Berlin Memorandum in which they demanded that, in order to prevent the spread of the revolt, the Sultan should grant an armistice of two months to Bosnia and Herzegovina, and that the measures outlined in the Andrassy Note should be carried out. They hinted that the neglect of these terms would be followed by military intervention. The Sultan refused to accept the Berlin Memorandum, to which France and Italy had agreed, on the ground that treaties which had been made by Turkey in the past precluded such armed intervention as the Powers contemplated. Disraeli was annoyed because Britain had not been consulted when the Memorandum was drawn up, but he made a grave mistake in refusing to accept it. On May 13th, 1876, Disraeli sent the British fleet to Besika Bay as a counter-move to the presence of German and French squadrons in Turkish waters. His actions weakened the Concert of Europe, aggravated the growing enmity between Great Britain and Russia, encouraged the Turks to resist the demands of the Powers and led the Sultan to think that he might rely upon British support.

**The Bulgarian Horrors, 1876** Bulgaria rebelled against Turkey in May 1876 and Serbia and Montenegro in July ; the two last were helped unofficially by Russian volunteers, and the Russian general Tchernayeff commanded the Serbian army. The Turkish irregular troops treated the Bulgarians with atrocious cruelty. They destroyed at least sixty villages and slaughtered thousands of innocent people. At Batak twelve hundred Bulgarians, who had surrendered on condition that their lives should be spared, were burned in the village church by the Turks. In September Gladstone left his 'old books, old friends and old trees' and aroused strong feeling in England by his pamphlet on 'the Bulgarian Horrors'. He asserted that '5,000,000 Bulgarians cowed and beaten down to the ground, hardly venturing to look upwards even to their Father in Heaven, have extended their hands to you'. He demanded that the Turks 'one and all, bag and baggage, shall clear out from the province they have desolated and profaned'.

The need of immediate reform in Turkey had now become obvious and many people in England felt that the coercion of Turkey by the Powers of Europe would be the best solution of the difficulty. But Disraeli utterly distrusted Russia and thought that the intervention of Russia in the affairs of Turkey was contrary to British interests.

By the end of September 1876 the Turks had routed the Serbians and were threatening Belgrade. Disraeli feared that Russia would come to the aid of Serbia and, to avert this contingency, suggested to the Sultan on September 21st, 1876, that the *status quo* should be maintained in Serbia and Montenegro; that local autonomy should be granted to Bosnia and Herzegovina; that Bulgaria should be properly administered, and that a complete scheme of reform should be drawn up by the Sultan and the Powers. The Sultan refused to accept these suggestions. On October 30th Russia threatened to declare war unless an armistice was granted to Serbia at once and Derby, the British Foreign Minister, warned the Sultan that his continued refusal would lead to the imposition of more onerous conditions. The Sultan therefore granted the armistice on November 1st and Serbia was saved from annihilation. Alexander II had sincerely desired to avoid war between Russia and Turkey. He had secured from Austria in July 1876 a promise of friendly neutrality if a Russo-Turkish War broke out, but this promise was conditional and the Czar's action was only a measure of precaution. But by November his attitude had changed, partly owing to the strong desire of the Russian military and Pan-Slav party to help the Balkan Christians in general and the Serbs in particular, and partly because he believed, correctly, that Britain had undue confidence in the prospects of reform in Turkey in spite of the obvious reluctance of the Porte to carry out the reforms to which it was already committed by treaty.

The Russian ultimatum of October 30th had caused great resentment in England which was increased when three days later Alexander II told the British ambassador at St. Petersburg that, although he had no desire to secure Constantinople,

he would 'be obliged to act alone' unless the Powers acted with greater vigour.

Disraeli thought that Russian intervention was now imminent and on November 9th, 1876, issued a grave warning to Russia in a speech that he made at the Lord Mayor's banquet. 'If England were to go to war in a righteous cause her resources would prove inexhaustible. She is not a country that when she enters into a campaign, has to ask herself whether she can support a second or third campaign.' Disraeli's attitude gained a considerable measure of support in England, but an important section of the Cabinet, especially Derby and Carnarvon, strongly objected to the idea of war with Russia on behalf of Turkey.

On the invitation of Derby, and with the cordial approval of Gladstone, another Conference of the Powers assembled at Constantinople on December 12th, 1876. The Czar, in spite of his recent pronouncement, sent a representative. Lord Salisbury, the British plenipotentiary, who had far less sympathy with Turkey than Disraeli, suggested to his colleagues that Turkey should be required to grant a certain measure of local government to Bosnia, Herzegovina and Bulgaria, and some increase of territory to Serbia and Montenegro. The system of taxation was to be reorganized and tax-farming was to be abolished. The Powers were to appoint two Commissioners of Control to supervise necessary measures of reform. These suggestions were accepted by the Powers and presented to Turkey as a formal demand on December 23rd, 1876. But on this day the Sultan gave his approval for a new constitution which had been drawn up by the liberal-minded Midhat Pasha. It provided for the establishment of a Legislature of Two Chambers, a responsible Executive, freedom of meeting and of the Press, an independent judiciary and compulsory education. The Sultan Abdul Hamid II refused the demands of the Powers on the ground that the reforms he proposed would ensure good government. The Conference had obtained nothing from Abdul Hamid but professions of good intentions and promises of reform. Both were worthless and Turkish promises in the nineteenth century proved the equivalent of

**Failure of Constantinople Conference, Dec. 1876**

*Punica fides* in classical times. Salisbury returned home bitterly disappointed that he had failed to establish peace between Russia and Turkey.

The next attempt to solve the question was made by Alexander II. At his suggestion the Powers accepted the London Protocol of March 31st, 1877, which approved of the new constitution which the Sultan had promised to set up, but reserved the rights of the Powers 'to consider in common as to the means which they may deem best fitted to secure the well-being of the Christian populations and the interests of the general peace'. The Sultan refused to accept the Protocol on the ground that 'Turkey as an independent State, cannot submit to be placed under any surveillance, whether collective or not'. In May 1877 he dismissed Midhat Pasha and withdrew the new constitution.

War broke out on April 24th, 1877, when the Russians invaded Turkey. The blame for the outbreak rests chiefly

**The Russo-Turkish War**, upon Abdul Hamid who persisted in the tortuous diplomacy with which Turkey had so often deceived the Powers. Disraeli<sup>1</sup> was largely responsible for the Turkish attitude. His policy had led the

1877-8 Turks to believe that they could rely upon the support of Great Britain against Russia, whose recent diplomacy had aroused general resentment in England and inspired Disraeli with deep suspicion of the Czar and all his works. The presence of the British fleet at Besika Bay undoubtedly encouraged Abdul Hamid to reject the London Protocol. The Russians, although the actual aggressors, were the least to blame. Alexander II had steadily resisted the desire of his own people to make war on Turkey; in spite of the chicanery of the Sultan he persisted in his efforts for peace and the last attempt made by the Powers to avert war was due to his instigation. If Disraeli's Cabinet had supported Russia war might have been avoided, but the Cabinet, as in the case of the Crimean War, was divided, and divisions in the Cabinet again prevented Britain from adopting a strong policy.

On May 30th, 1877, Gortchakoff, the Russian Foreign

<sup>1</sup> Created Earl of Beaconsfield in 1876.

Minister, assured Salisbury that Russia had no designs on Constantinople, Egypt or the Red Sea. Therefore Britain adopted an attitude of neutrality, greatly to the indignation of the Turks, who asserted that 'she has abandoned her old and faithful ally, and leaves us to be crushed by her and our implacable enemy, because forsooth a few Bulgarians were killed'.

In spite of the defence of Plevna, which Osman Pasha gallantly maintained from July 19th to December 10th, 1877, the Russians, assisted by the Serbians, Roumanians and Montenegrins, proved victorious. They occupied Adrianople on January 20th, 1878, and an armistice between Turkey and Russia was concluded eleven days later.

The success of Russia caused strong feeling in Great Britain. It was feared that, in spite of her recent promises, Russia would seize Constantinople, and Disraeli thought that she would use the advantage she had secured in the war to extend her authority in the Middle East and to threaten India. The Liberals, who now advocated the dismemberment of Turkey, strongly objected to the idea of fighting against Russia on behalf of those whom Gladstone called 'the unspeakable Turk'. Derby and Carnarvon were resolutely opposed to war. But popular opinion clamoured for war with Russia ; wild enthusiasm was aroused by a music-hall song—

We don't want to fight,  
But, by Jingo if we do,  
We've got the men, we've got the ships,  
And we've got the money too.

Jingoism, which took its name from the song, was rampant. Queen Victoria did all she could to induce the Prime Minister to declare war on these 'great barbarians'.

Great Britain had no *casus belli* for her neutrality had not been threatened, but Disraeli made preparations in case war should break out. On January 17th, 1878, the Queen's Speech warned Russia that 'some unexpected occurrence may render it incumbent upon me to adopt measures of precaution'. The British fleet was ordered to enter the

Dardanelles, whereupon Derby and Carnarvon resigned on the ground that only the imminent danger of a Russian attack on Constantinople, the Suez Canal or Egypt could justify such a step. The order was soon countermanded and the former withdrew his resignation. Parliament voted £6,000,000 to pay for munitions of war. On February 13th the British fleet was sent to the Sea of Marmora, without the consent of the Sultan, to protect British subjects in Constantinople. It anchored off Prinkipo Island only ten miles from the Russian fleet which lay at San Stefano. The Russians threatened in reply to occupy Constantinople in order to protect the Christian population. The position was critical, but the immediate danger was relieved when at the request of the Sultan, who wanted neither British nor Russians in Constantinople, the British fleet returned to Besika Bay.

Disraeli had attempted to strengthen his position by negotiations with other Powers. A fantastic scheme to form a league between Great Britain, Greece, France, Italy and Austria to maintain the freedom of the Mediterranean and check the progress of Russia came to nothing. But Austria resented the Armistice of Adrianople which, by granting autonomy to Bosnia, had frustrated her desire to establish her influence in that country. She therefore suggested that a European Congress should be held to consider the Balkan question, and on March 4th, 1878, Derby agreed to the plan on condition that 'all questions dealt with in the Treaty of Paris between Russia and Turkey should be considered as subjects to be discussed'. Greece had now taken up arms against Turkey in the hope of securing Macedonia but withdrew her troops at the request of the Powers who promised that her claims for an extension of territory should receive full consideration.

On March 3rd, 1878, Russia and Turkey made the Treaty of San Stefano which ended the war. The treaty proposed to establish a 'Big Bulgaria' which was to include more than half of the Balkan peninsula and would command the approaches to Salonika and Constantinople. Serbia, Montenegro and Roumania were to

**Treaty of  
San Stefano, 1878**

become independent states and the first two were to receive additional territory. Bosnia and Herzegovina were to become autonomous ; Crete, Epirus and Thessaly were to receive some measure of local government ; Turkey renewed her promises to protect the Armenians. Roumania, which had faithfully supported Russia, was to surrender to Russia Southern Bessarabia in exchange for a part of the Dobrudja which Turkey was to give up. Russia was to receive Batoum and Kars in Asia Minor.

The Treaty of San Stefano caused grave dissatisfaction in the Balkans. Serbia was to surrender territory to Bulgaria ; Roumania resented the loss of Southern Bessarabia for which the barren Dobrudja was an inadequate exchange. Greece, not being a Slav state, got nothing at all. Every material clause in the Treaty involved a violation of the Treaty of Paris, but the other signatories to that Treaty had not been consulted. Great Britain protested against the violation of the Treaty of Paris and demanded that the new treaty should be submitted in its entirety for consideration by a Congress of the Powers. Great Britain particularly objected to the great increase of Russian influence. The Treaty of San Stefano was a triumph of Pan-Slavism and therefore of Russia. It was expected that Big Bulgaria, which was to be supervised by a Russian governor for two years, would become practically a province of Russia. The reforms which were to be carried out in Armenia, Epirus and Thessaly were to be subject to the approval of Russia. Beaconsfield declared that 'all the European dominions of the Ottoman Porte are . . . put under the administration of Russia. . . . The effect of all the stipulations combined will be to make the Black Sea as much a Russian lake as the Caspian' : the harbours on the Aegean would give Russia 'a preponderating influence' in that sea. The acquisition of Batoum and Kars would threaten British interests in Asia Minor. The integrity of Turkey which had long been a cardinal point of British diplomacy, would be shattered and thus a long-standing barrier to Russian aggression would be removed.

Austria strongly resented the establishment of Big Bulgaria, a Slav state which would effectively prevent her extension

towards the Aegean, while the treaty seemed finally to destroy her hopes of securing Bosnia and Herzegovina.

All the nations who were aggrieved requested Great Britain to take up their cause ; Roumania urged that this country should declare war on Russia and promised to support Britain against her recent ally. Russia was most unwilling to refer the Treaty of San Stefano to a European Congress, but Great Britain acted with great vigour. In March Beaconsfield called out the reserves and determined to seize a port in Syria to guard the route to India. Derby therefore resigned and the Marquis of Salisbury became Foreign Minister on March 30th, 1878. He dealt with the difficult problem with marked success. On April 1st he set forth the British case in a masterly circular which he addressed to the Powers. He repeated the declaration of the Conference of London, 1871, that no treaty could be varied without the consent of all the contracting parties and asserted that the Powers, as signatories to the Treaty of Paris, had the right to consider the Treaty of San Stefano which was a violation of the Treaty of Paris. He protested against the dangerous increase in the power of Russia which would follow the creation of a Big Bulgaria, but admitted that the failure of Turkey to fulfil her promises of reform would justify the Powers in depriving her of some of her territory. In a speech Salisbury showed that Great Britain was determined to maintain her own position in the East. 'We object to Russia, under the mask of either Slav or Turk, dominating on the various coasts (Persian, Arabian, Syrian, Greek), where we have now friends, clients and interests. How that domination is to be met, whether by diminution or by counterpoise, is another question'. Jingoism was now rampant in Britain and the danger of war with Russia seemed so real that Beaconsfield on April 17th ordered seven thousand Indian troops to proceed to Malta.

Beaconsfield's vigorous action ; the fear that both Austria and Roumania would support Great Britain if war broke out ; the knowledge that Bismarck would not help Russia against Austria ; the heavy losses the Russians had suffered in the late war and the fear that foreign war would be fol-

lowed by Nihilist risings in Russia compelled Alexander II to accept an invitation to the Congress of Berlin to which the Treaty of San Stefano was to be referred.

Great Britain had taken the lead in Europe and regained the position she had lost since the death of Palmerston. 'From April 1st until the Congress met at Berlin the course of European diplomacy became almost continuously sequent upon action initiated in Downing Street.'<sup>1</sup>

Before the Congress of Berlin met Salisbury settled the main points at issue by secret treaties. By a treaty with **Preliminary Treaties** Russia Big Bulgaria was to lose Eastern Roumelia ; Russia was to keep Bessarabia and Kars, Batoum and Ardahan. Turkey agreed that Britain should occupy Cyprus as long as Russia held these three towns and, as usual, the Sultan promised to introduce reforms into Armenia. Britain agreed that Austria should occupy Bosnia and Herzegovina. On June 14th the *Globe* made one of the most famous of journalistic coups by publishing the secret agreement which Salisbury and Shouvaloff had concluded on May 30th.

The Congress of Berlin met on June 13th, 1878, under the presidency of Bismarck. Violent disputes took place between **The Congress of Berlin** Beaconsfield and Gortchakoff who resented the success of British diplomacy. Beaconsfield kept a special train ready to take him back to Calais at a moment's notice ; Gortchakoff on one occasion packed his trunks with a view to an immediate departure. The violent disputes between the representatives of Great Britain and Russia might have wrecked the Congress but for the great tact Bismarck displayed as president.

The conditions of the preliminary treaties were confirmed and, to a large extent, the Congress of Berlin proved a court of registration. Big Bulgaria was not formed, Eastern Roumelia was kept under Turkish suzerainty, but it was to be organized by a Commission of the Powers. Macedonia was restored to Turkey. Russia got Southern Bessarabia and the three towns in Asia Minor, and undertook not to fortify Batoum. Great Britain received Cyprus as 'a place of arms' which would enable her the more easily to prevent Russian

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Salisbury*, Vol. II, p. 231.

aggression either in Asia Minor or against the Suez Canal. Austria received the right to 'occupy and administer' Bosnia and Herzegovina, although these provinces remained nominally under the suzerainty of Turkey, and to maintain garrisons in Novi Bazar.

Serbia was recognized as an independent state and received some Bulgarian territory to the South-East. Montenegro was also recognized as an independent state and received Antivari, thus securing a port on the Adriatic, but was compelled to surrender Spizza to Austria and Dulcigno to Turkey. Greece again received nothing except a promise that her frontier in Thessaly and Epirus should be improved at the expense of Turkey.

The Treaty of Berlin was a severe blow to Russia and to the Pan-Slav movement. Russia had waged a costly but

Results of the Treaty of Berlin, 1878 successful war against Turkey ; she now lost the spoils of victory. Her naval power was seriously hampered, for she was forbidden to send warships into the Danube, and Turkey was confirmed in her right to prevent foreign warships from passing the Dardanelles. The occupation of Bosnia, Herzegovina and Novi Bazar by Austria drove a wedge between the Slav states in the north of the Balkan Peninsula ; the restoration of Dulcigno to Turkey and Spizza to Austria limited the extension of Slav influence on the Adriatic. Austria now became a check on Slav aggression. But Austria was not content and, although in 1881 she made a treaty with Serbia, her attempt to carry out her *Drang nach Osten* at the expense of Serbia proved the immediate cause of the Great War. Turkey was saved from destruction ; 'there is again a Turkey in Europe,' said Bismarck. Disraeli, following the policy of Palmerston, had wished to maintain the integrity of Turkey, but circumstances had proved too strong for him. The integrity of the Turkish Empire was weakened but the retention of Macedonia and Eastern Roumelia would help her again to defend Salonika and Constantinople against Russian attack.

The Treaty of Berlin seemed undoubtedly a triumph for British diplomacy but after events were to prove that that triumph was largely imaginary.

Russia, finding herself checked in Europe, diverted her attention to the Middle East and her intrigues in Persia and Afghanistan seemed seriously to threaten the security of the North-West Frontier of India. Resentment at the failure of Germany to support her cause led Russia to seek other friends ; the estrangement between Russia and Germany which resulted from the Treaty of Berlin was a remote cause of the *Dual Entente* of 1893 between France and Russia and the consequent *Triple Entente* of 1907 between Great Britain, Russia and France. To some extent the Treaty of Berlin marks a further step towards the Great War.

The main result of the Treaty of Berlin was the establishment of national Slav states in the Balkans. The national feeling in Bulgaria, which Beaconsfield had utterly failed to appreciate, proved too strong to be resisted. In 1885 Eastern Roumelia was joined to Bulgaria and thus the formation of Big Bulgaria, which the Treaty of Berlin had prevented in 1878, was actually accomplished only seven years later. Roumania became a kingdom in 1881 and Serbia in 1882. But these Slav kingdoms did not become in any way dependencies of Russia nor did they form a Slav union of the Balkan States. Great jealousy arose between them and, although the Concert of Europe tried to reconcile their differences, frequent wars disturbed the peace of South-Eastern Europe.

The promises that were made and the undertakings that were given at Berlin were often broken. Turkey of course did not keep her promise to give fair treatment to the Armenians, and Great Britain failed in her undertaking to secure it. The Powers did not ensure the establishment of good government in Macedonia. Roumania did not fulfil her promise to grant political equality to Jews. Russia fortified Batoum in 1886.

But Beaconsfield had obviously succeeded in curbing the power of Russia and his assertion that he had secured for Great Britain ' Peace with Honour ' was accepted by many as correct. Subsequent events showed that although he had acted with great vigour and made British influence a power in Europe he had brought neither Peace to Europe nor Honour to Great Britain. But the revival of the system of Congresses

under the name of the 'Concert of Europe' did avert war at the time ; if it had become an established fact it might have saved Europe from Armageddon.

The acquisition of Batoum and Kars strengthened the hold of Russia on the Caucasus and brought Russia into closer contact with Persia. The British Government had for some time adopted a passive policy on the North-West frontier of India. They had regarded the Indus as the boundary of British India ; they had tried to maintain friendly relations with Afghanistan but had claimed no right of intervention in the country. But the continued advance of Russia in Turkestan, and especially the conquest of Khokand in 1876, led Beaconsfield to endeavour to extend British influence in order to give greater security to India, the importance of which had been emphasized when on January 1st, 1877, Queen Victoria took the title of Empress of India. Lord Lytton was appointed Viceroy in 1876 and was instructed by Beaconsfield to adopt a forward policy. He therefore aimed at securing the control of the passes of the Hindoo Koosh mountains, which were to be the boundary of British influence, and at establishing British agents in Afghanistan.

In December 1876 the Treaty of Jacobabad was made with the Khan of Khelat. It strengthened British influence in Baluchistan and gave Great Britain the right of garrisoning Quetta which commanded the Bolan Pass, the chief means of communication between Afghanistan and Baluchistan. But Shere Ali, the Amir of Afghanistan, refused to receive a British agent at Cabul and was therefore driven off the throne. His son and successor Yakoob Khan agreed by the Treaty of Gandamak (June 1879) to accept a British agent, to allow Great Britain to control his foreign policy and to give to the Indian Government the control of the Khyber Pass. Great Britain undertook to defend Afghanistan against Russian aggression. Sir Louis Cavagnari was appointed British agent. On September 3rd, 1879, a body of mutinous Afghan troops attacked the British Residency and murdered Cavagnari and all his staff. The prestige of Britain was restored by the successful operations of Generals Roberts, who took Cabul,

and Stewart, who held Candahar, but before a settlement could be effected Beaconsfield had ceased to be Prime Minister.

South Africa offered another field for aggressive action. Lord Carnarvon, the Colonial Secretary, strongly favoured the **South Africa** extension of British power and advocated the establishment of a Union of South Africa which should include the whole of the extreme south of the continent. In accordance with this policy Sir Theophilus Shepstone annexed the Transvaal on April 12th, 1877. His action roused the strong opposition of the great majority of the inhabitants although it probably saved the country from an attack by the Zulus. Sir Bartle Frere, the High commissioner of South Africa, possibly owing to the danger of a Zulu invasion of the Transvaal and Natal, demanded that Cetewayo, the war-like king of Zululand, should accept the suzerainty of Great Britain and disband his powerful armies. Cetewayo refused to comply and Zululand was invaded. British feeling was exasperated by a Zulu victory over Lord Chelmsford at Isandlwana on January 22nd, 1879, but on the same day the heroic defence of Rorke's Drift by a mere handful of British soldiers kept the victorious Zulus from entering Natal. Lord Chelmsford atoned for his defeat by completely routing Cetewayo at Ulundi on July 4th and this victory ended the war. Zululand became a British protectorate, but the grave doubts felt by many as to the justice of the action of Sir Bartle Frere and the general exasperation that was caused by the mismanagement of the early operations greatly weakened Beaconsfield's government.

**Disraeli's Foreign Policy** Disraeli's foreign policy was based on his Imperialism: 'Our duty is to maintain the Empire of England (which can) alone give it (Britain) that ascendancy in the councils of Europe which will secure peace'. His foreign policy was therefore marked by hostility to Russia whose policy in the Near East seemed to threaten India. But his Imperialism sometimes degenerated into Jingoism, and he did not seem to appreciate the appalling results that would follow war between Russia and Great Britain. He failed to see that Turkey could no longer be regarded as a 'bulwark of civilization against barbarism', and his attempt to maintain the

integrity of Turkey as a barrier against Russia proved a failure. He aggravated the ill feeling which had long existed between Russia and Great Britain, and the resentment which the Treaty of Berlin aroused at Constantinople made it easier for Germany to establish friendly relations with the Porte. He left to his successors a legacy of difficulties in Egypt, Afghanistan and South Africa and the net results of his policy (the acquisition of Cyprus and the Queen's new title of Empress of India) were inadequate. But his policy in re-establishing the Concert of Europe without committing Great Britain to a close alliance with any foreign Power was sound, and the revived Congress System was destined to render real service to the cause of European peace.

The prestige of Great Britain was greatly strengthened by Disraeli. Bismarck was much impressed by the development of Imperialism and by the successful resistance that Disraeli offered to Russian aggression. In 1879 he made overtures for an alliance between Germany and Great Britain in the hope that, if war broke out with France, Germany would secure the support of the British Navy. But no alliance was made because Great Britain was averse to any arrangement which would hamper her freedom of action and an alliance with Germany would involve a recognition of the permanence of the German occupation of Alsace and Lorraine. Bismarck therefore on October 7th, 1879, made the Dual Alliance with Austria which gave a new direction to European policy.

## CHAPTER VIII

### GLADSTONE'S SECOND MINISTRY, 1880-1885

**B**EACONSFIELD'S ministry had fallen largely owing to the expense of the Afghan and Zulu wars which, as Gladstone asserted, had 'plunged the country into a series of deficits'. The aggressive policy of the former government had caused great dissatisfaction; the new government, in which Granville became Foreign Secretary, was compelled to deal with difficult problems that arose out of recent events in Berlin, Egypt, Afghanistan and the Transvaal. It reversed Beaconsfield's policy in Afghanistan and South Africa, but was compelled by circumstances to follow it elsewhere.

The Treaty of Berlin was enforced with difficulty. The Russian newspapers protested vigorously against the terms of the Treaty. The Czar reinstated Pan-Slavists of Berlin in office and they deliberately delayed the evacuation of the Balkans by Russian troops. But the Powers stood firm and by resolute action compelled Turkey to agree to certain modifications of the Treaty which circumstances rendered necessary. Montenegro had failed to secure a portion of Albania which had been granted to her at Berlin. In 1881 the Powers resolved that Dulcigno, which had been assigned to Turkey in 1878, should be given to Montenegro as compensation. The Sultan refused to give up Dulcigno; the Allied fleets made a demonstration off the coast of Albania which proved ineffective. The Powers then threatened to seize the customs at Smyrna and the Sultan therefore agreed to give up Dulcigno. Greece failed to secure the rectification of her northern frontier and determined to enforce her rights by war. A meeting of the Powers, held in February 1881,

gave to Greece Thessaly and part of Epirus and thus for a time averted war between Turkey and Greece.

In July 1880 Abdur Rahman was recognized as Amir of Afghanistan by the British who now withdrew their demand <sup>Afghanistan,</sup> for a British resident in Cabul. Ayoob Khan, a son of the former ruler, claimed the throne, utterly routed a British force under General Burrows at Maiwand on July 27th and besieged Candahar. The siege of Candahar was raised by General Roberts who made a forced march of three hundred and thirteen miles in twenty-one days and completely defeated Ayoob Khan. 'The march', said Disraeli,<sup>1</sup> 'was the march of Xenophon, and the victory that of Alexander.' The British troops evacuated Candahar and Abdur Rahman was established as an independent monarch.

Gladstone's policy of withdrawal from Afghanistan was a complete change from the aggressive action of Beaconsfield who denounced it as 'a policy of scuttle'. It was supported by a large majority in the Commons and, although condemned by the Lords, seems to have been generally approved in England.

Russian explorers were working their way through Central Asia. Their efforts were not officially sanctioned by the <sup>Merv, 1884</sup> government, but, if opportunity arose, the new <sup>Pendjeh, 1885</sup> territory they had explored was annexed by Russia and in 1884 Merv, which had been regarded as outside the sphere of Russian influence, was occupied. Granville protested in vain against the occupation. Russia was determined to take full advantage of the fact that the British government was gravely concerned with the problem of the Soudan. She continued her aggressive policy and in March 1885 defeated the Afghans at Pendjeh and seized the town which the British asserted formed part of Afghanistan. Again a noisy party loudly demanded war with Russia, but Granville and Gladstone refused to be stampeded and Abdur Rahman, the Amir, acted with marked restraint. Granville suggested that the Amir should cede Pendjeh to Russia and that the latter should recognize the right of Afghanistan to the Zulfikar Pass, a very important strategical position which Russia had

<sup>1</sup> *Letters to Lady Bradford and Lady Chesterfield*, Benn, II, 289.

claimed. A settlement on these lines was effected by Salisbury in July 1885.

The problem of Egypt proved difficult and led to serious estrangement between Great Britain and France. The Egypt position of Egypt on the route to India, the purchase of the Khedive's shares in the Suez Canal,<sup>1</sup> and the great use made of the Canal by British shipping gave Great Britain a vital interest in the welfare of Egypt. But since 1830 France had been striving to strengthen her influence in the Mediterranean. Her attempt to take advantage of Mehemet Ali's position had been frustrated by Palmerston.<sup>2</sup> France had annexed Algeria in 1842 and the annexation had been formally recognized by Great Britain. The secret Anglo-Russian Convention which preceded the Treaty of Berlin<sup>3</sup> had caused great resentment in France and, to ensure the maintenance of friendly relations with that country, Salisbury had promised not to interfere with French interests in Egypt and had recognized the right of France to establish predominant influence in Tunis which she succeeded in doing in 1881. France considered that the construction of the Suez Canal by the French engineer, De Lesseps, gave her a special right of intervention in Egypt, and felt bound to protect the interests of French shareholders who had invested large sums in Egyptian bonds. The problem of Egypt, which formed part of the Turkish Empire, was further complicated by the fact that the action taken by the Great Powers in the Congress of Berlin had established a precedent of interference in the affairs of Turkey.

The Dual Control,<sup>4</sup> to which the Egyptians strongly objected, resulted in the employment of some twelve hundred Arabi Pasha, foreign officials, and commercial concessions had 1882 led to the residence in Egypt of a considerable number of foreign merchants. Growing resentment at the increase of the European population led to the formation of an Egyptian national party which demanded 'Egypt for the Egyptians'. The favour shown to Turkish as distinct from Egyptian officers and the miserable pay, which was often in arrears, caused great dissatisfaction in the army of the

<sup>1</sup> p. 68.

<sup>2</sup> p. 32.

<sup>3</sup> p. 79.

<sup>4</sup> p. 69.

Khedive and a revolt, headed by Arabi Pasha, the War Minister, broke out in 1882. The rising, originally military, expanded into a national movement to deliver Egypt from foreign control and Arabi became practically ruler of Egypt. On June 11th the rebels seized Alexandria, massacred sixty Europeans, and erected fortifications to command the harbour.

The rising vitally affected the position of Great Britain. The British Ambassador at Constantinople, Lord Dufferin, had assured the Sultan that his government wished to maintain 'the full integrity of the Sultan's rights' over Egypt, and that its sole objects were to protect the Suez Canal and to establish capable native government in Egypt. The Sultan, who 'hated' the French, offered to give to Great Britain 'the exclusive control and administration of Egypt'. Gladstone and Granville refused the offer which Queen Victoria strongly urged them to accept.

The situation in Alexandria called for prompt action and Great Britain invited France and Italy to co-operate with her in restoring order. Both declined and Granville, impatient of the 'diplomatic futilities' of the Powers and anxious to protect the Suez Canal, determined to restore order by force. On July 11th, 1882, a British squadron under Admiral Sir Beauchamp Seymour bombarded Alexandria. Arabi's troops evacuated the town which was occupied by British troops. 'So soon as the bombardment began the French fleet steamed away in virtuous disgust.'<sup>1</sup>

British ministers wished to secure good government for Egypt, but did not wish to occupy the country because they were unwilling to increase their territory in the Mediterranean, to arouse the jealousy of France, or to incur the heavy cost of occupation. The government seemed unable to decide upon a definite policy and its own indecision added to its difficulties.

Arabi remained in the field and until he was crushed Egypt could not hope for good government. Contrary to his own desires Gladstone was compelled to carry on the work which had begun at Alexandria, and a successful campaign by Sir

<sup>1</sup> *Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy*, Vol. III, p. 171.

Garnet Wolseley ended in the complete defeat of Arabi at Tel-el-Kebir on September 13th, 1882.

Her intervention had made Great Britain responsible for the good government of Egypt. She was anxious to secure the co-operation of France, but France refused to co-operate and did all she could to prevent Great Britain from making a satisfactory settlement.

Lord Dufferin was sent to Egypt in December 1882 to reform the government. He urged that, as far as possible, Egyptians should govern Egypt and that a system of local and parliamentary institutions should be established. But British control was still necessary as the Egyptians were not yet capable of self-government, and the result of Lord Dufferin's work was, in practice, the establishment of British supremacy. In January 1883 the Dual Control was abolished and replaced by a single foreign official. Granville invited France to make the first nomination; when France refused to nominate, Major Evelyn Baring was appointed Consul-General. France viewed these changes with deep concern and regarded them as a prelude to the transference of Egypt into a British protectorate. To allay the fears of France Granville assured the Powers that the British government aimed solely at the establishment of an effective native government and definitely promised that, as soon as possible, the British troops who now formed an army of occupation should be withdrawn from Egypt.

Difficulties that arose in the Soudan postponed the withdrawal of the British troops. The Soudan belonged to Egypt, but the inhabitants had been so cruelly oppressed by the Khedive's officials that Mohammed Ahmed, a fanatic who claimed to be the Mahdi or Messiah, easily gained their enthusiastic support and made himself master of the whole of the Soudan, with the exception of a few places where Egyptian garrisons continued to hold out. The Khedive wished to reconquer the country and sent General Hicks with an army of ten thousand ill-equipped Egyptian troops to overthrow the Mahdi. Hicks' army was utterly destroyed in the Soudanese desert on November 5th, 1883. The Khedive determined to assert his authority over the

Soudan, but the British government absolutely forbade any further expeditions and compelled Tewfik to abandon the idea of reconquering the lost territory. But the Egyptian garrisons who were still holding out had to be saved, and for this purpose, and for this purpose alone, the Cabinet sent out General Charles George Gordon who had governed the Soudan successfully from 1877 to 1879, and whose brilliant work in putting down the Taiping revolt had gained him the nickname of 'Chinese Gordon'. On arriving at Cairo Gordon was appointed by the Khedive Governor-General of the Soudan and, as such, he determined not only to keep the Egyptian garrisons in the Soudan, but to 'smash the Mahdi' and regain the Soudan for the Khedive. His impulsive character led him absolutely to disregard the definite instructions he had received from the British government. The latter ought either to have recalled Gordon at once, or to have given him a large army, or to have allowed him to secure the help of Zebehr Pasha in spite of the fact that Zebehr had earned unenviable notoriety as a slave-trader. But the government delayed action; 'it seems', said Salisbury, 'a matter of positive physical pain for the government to come to any resolution'. At last, in May 1884, it ordered Gordon to evacuate Khartoum. The order came too late, for the city was now closely besieged by the forces of the Mahdi. A relief expedition ought to have been sent at once, but again the government procrastinated. An expedition was sent early in 1885; it arrived in sight of Khartoum on January 27th only to find that Gordon had been slain two days before after holding out for three hundred and seventeen days. Gordon admitted that he had 'been very insubordinate to Her Majesty's Government' and his own insubordination was the main cause of his death. The government, knowing Gordon's peculiar temperament, made a serious mistake in appointing him. Having appointed him they failed to send him speedy relief and for this failure they were justly condemned. After the death of Gordon the British government withdrew its troops from the Soudan but took measures to defend the Southern Frontier of Egypt.

Further difficulties arose owing to the development of

colonial policy both in Germany and France. Bismarck's interests were European and his great objects were **Colonial Expansion of Germany** to ensure the internal development of Germany and to maintain peace. In 1873 he said that colonies would only be a cause of weakness' to Germany, and as late as 1884 he declared, 'I am not a colony man.' But he found himself forced to embark on a policy of colonial expansion partly to secure new markets for German trade, partly to provide homes under the German flag for the large number of emigrants who left the Fatherland every year. France had always realized the importance of colonial expansion and Jules Ferry, during his second ministry from February 1883 to March 1885, gave a great impetus to the movement. Bismarck viewed this new development with favour because he felt that if France was devoted to colonial expansion she would have less time to think about Alsace and Lorraine.

Much of the most valuable portion of Africa belonged to the British Empire, but vast portions were still available for **The Scramble for Africa** colonization. The nations of Europe now took part in a 'Scramble for Africa', and in 1881 forty-one expeditions were sent to explore and, if advisable, to establish claims. The Scramble for Africa often led to disputes between Great Britain, who to some extent was the man in possession, and France and Germany.

Great Britain had neglected to occupy the land lying immediately to the north of the Orange River and in 1868 had refused a request from the German Missionary Society, which had settled in Namaqua and Damara Lands, to annex their territory. In 1883 Luderitz, a Bremen merchant, occupied Angra Pequena and two hundred and fifteen square miles of territory lying north of the Orange River. The people of Cape Colony strongly objected to the establishment of a German colony on their borders, but on April 24th, 1884, Bismarck proclaimed a German protectorate over the coast from Angra Pequena to the Orange River. The same thing happened in Western Africa. The British government had refused to take some of the native chiefs under its protection, but Dr. Nachtigall made treaties with them and founded a settlement in the Cameroons, which Bismarck declared to be

a German colony in October 1884. In the same year Dr. Peters landed at Zanzibar and obtained from the Sultan a grant of sixty thousand square miles. This proved the beginning of German East Africa.

Serious difficulties arose in regard to New Guinea which the Australians were anxious to incorporate in the British Empire. In April 1883 the government of **New Guinea, 1884** Queensland had annexed a portion of the island, but the British government declared this action to be 'null in point of law and not to be admitted in point of policy'. But a British protectorate was proclaimed in the South of New Guinea on November 6th, 1884. A month later the Germans took possession of the North of the island and the name of Kaiser Wilhelm's Land was given to the new colony.

Great Britain objected to the establishment of German colonies which would certainly prejudice the development of British trade and might, in some cases, lead to frontier disputes. But the failure of the British government to seize favourable opportunities to extend the Empire had given to Germany chances of which she had taken full advantage; recent events in Egypt had made France bitterly hostile to Great Britain and in the circumstances the government was forced to adopt a conciliatory policy which aroused great indignation in Cape Colony and Australia. Derby, who had left the Conservative party and was now Colonial Secretary in Gladstone's government, hoping to secure the support of Germany for the British policy in Egypt, formally agreed to the annexation by Germany of Kaiser Wilhelm's Land, the Cameroons and Angra Pequena, but successfully resisted the attempt of Germany to secure St. Lucia Bay in Zululand and the Portuguese Colony of Delagoa Bay. Zanzibar had not yet become an official German Colony and the British East Africa Company was formed to maintain British interests and to check the action of the German East Africa Company.

The extension of European influence along the valley of the Congo was another phase of the 'Scramble for Africa'.

**The Congo** Henry Stanley had explored the Congo as the agent of King Leopold II of Belgium, and his reports were so favourable that, in 1883, the King established

the Congo Free State as his own property and not as a Belgian Colony. In 1882 the explorations of De Brazza led to the formation of a vast French colony, which occupied a considerable portion of territory lying between the Congo Free State and the Atlantic Ocean. The problem was further complicated when Portugal advanced a claim to certain rights in the upper reaches of the Congo ; Great Britain recognized the claim in the hope that the establishment of Portuguese influence would prevent a further extension of the French colony. On November 5th, 1883, Portugal formally claimed rights over the mouth of the Congo and thus threatened to limit the powers of navigation hitherto enjoyed by other European nations.

Granville tried to settle the difficult problems that had arisen by an agreement with Portugal, and on February 26th, 1884, a Treaty was made between Great Britain and Portugal in which these countries asserted their sole right to control the navigation of the Congo. Bismarck naturally protested against such a claim and, on the suggestion of France and Germany, an International Conference met in Berlin from November 1884 to February 1885 to deal with the question. The Conference resolved that no occupation of territory should be recognized unless it was made effective by the presence of troops or officials of the occupying Power. It decided that the navigation of the Congo and the Niger should be free to all nations ; it recognized Leopold II as the personal owner of the Congo Free State and passed measures for the suppression of slavery and the slave trade. The Concert of Europe had again proved its worth.

Gladstone had strongly denounced the annexation of the Transvaal and encouraged the Boers to hope for the early restoration of their independence. But British officials reported that the country was not ready for self-government and Wolseley told the Boers that the 'Vaal would flow back through the Drakenberg' before the British would give up the Transvaal. The disappointment of their hopes led the Boers to take up arms, and on February 26th, 1881, they defeated a small British force in a skirmish at Majuba Hill, where General George Colley was killed. As

a settlement had been made before the battle took place the Government considered that Colley had made a serious mistake in fighting at Majuba, and feared that a continuation of the war might lead to a Dutch rising in Cape Colony. They refused to carry on the campaign and by the Convention of Pretoria acknowledged the independence of the Transvaal, while reserving for Great Britain a general suzerainty with the special right of supervising foreign policy.

The Convention was hotly denounced as an ignominious surrender by some who urged that the war should be continued until the Boers were routed. Others as strongly commended it as the just recognition of legal rights. There is no doubt that it proved one of the causes of the Boer War of 1899-1902, for the ignorant Boers thought that they had broken the military power of Great Britain at Majuba and hoped to do so again in 1899.

Gladstone's Second Ministry ended on June 8th, 1885, when he resigned owing to an adverse vote on the budget. Foreign policy had occupied much of his attention and Results of Gladstone's Policy, 1880-85 Salisbury declared that 'neglect or postponement of action had been a notable cause of failure in England's diplomatic history'.<sup>1</sup> Salisbury's statement was undoubtedly true of British policy in Egypt, and the conciliatory attitude which circumstances compelled the ministry to adopt towards Germany appeared prejudicial to the interests of this country. There was some justification too for Salisbury's assertion that Gladstone had 'just thrown away into the sea' the influence that Great Britain had once exercised in Constantinople, and his action in withdrawing in 1883 the British Consuls whom Salisbury had established in Asia Minor gave to Germany an opportunity of commercial enterprise which she eagerly embraced.

But the revival of the Concert of Europe was a great diplomatic achievement. In 1880 Granville had written to his wife that 'the Concert of Europe is gone to the devil'. But in 1881, largely owing to his efforts, the Concert maintained peace and compelled Turkey to agree to necessary modifications of the Treaty of Berlin. In 1885 the Concert

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Lord Salisbury*, Vol. III, 21a.

effected a settlement of the difficult question of the Congo.

The policy of the Government had not strengthened the position of Great Britain in Europe. France was embittered by British policy in Egypt although that policy was largely determined by the refusal of France to co-operate ; feeling ran so high in France that in 1883 the Prince of Wales was compelled to defer a visit to Paris owing to the strong hostility the Parisians felt towards Great Britain. Russia was angry because her extension in Central Asia had been checked and the common hostility of France and Russia towards Great Britain contributed to the establishment of the *Dual Entente* between Russia and France in 1893. In 1879 Bismarck had made unofficial overtures for an alliance between Germany, Austria and Great Britain. But the resentment which his colonial policy had aroused in Great Britain and the opposition, weak though it was, which British statesmen had offered led him to adopt an attitude of defence if not of hostility, and to confirm the *Dreikaiserbund* of 1881 by the agreement made by the Emperors of Russia, Austria and the German Emperor at Skieriewice on September 15th, 1884.

## CHAPTER IX

### LORD SALISBURY, 1885-1892

**L**ORD SALISBURY was Prime Minister from June 1885 to January 1886 and from August 1886 to June 1892. For the greater part of the time he held the post of Foreign Secretary as well as Prime Minister and the work he accomplished, particularly during his first and second ministries, entitles him to be regarded as a great Foreign Minister, worthy of comparison with Castlereagh, Canning and Palmerston.

On accession to office Salisbry found that the weakness of Gladstone's ministry had reduced Great Britain to a position of isolation at a time when grave problems demanded solution in Europe, Asia and Africa.

France was bitterly hostile ; 'the two nations', said Lord Lyons, 'come into contact in every part of the globe'. By **The Position 1885** Britain had lost the commanding position at **of Great Britain in 1885** Constantinople which she had secured in 1878 and Turkey was no longer friendly. Bismarck, who in 1879 had seemed anxious to make an alliance with Great Britain, was now encouraging France in her schemes of colonial expansion which endangered British interests. Russia continued hostile in spite of the treaty of September 1885<sup>1</sup> by which the danger of immediate war had been averted.

Salisbury saw that complete isolation had become dangerous and, while absolutely unwilling to make any alliances which would commit Britain to warlike intervention, was sincerely anxious to work on amicable terms with the Powers of Europe.

The condition of Europe was such as to justify Salisbury's

<sup>1</sup> p. 87.  
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position. Bismarck's policy since 1871 had been defensive. **Bismarck and Great Britain** He lived in constant fear that France would attempt to recover Alsace-Lorraine and knew that a mourning wreath still hung on the statue of Strasburg in the Place de la Concorde. He felt that Germany was in constant danger of a double attack from Russia on the East and from France on the West. 'The impression prevails', said Salisbury, 'that Germany is in genuine terror at a possible union between France and Russia.' Bismarck was therefore anxious to keep on good terms with Russia and in 1884 he made his first 'Reinsurance Treaty' with her. Common fear of Russia was a bond of Union between Austria and Germany, and the Triple Alliance had been made between Germany, Austria and Italy in 1882 partly as a protection against a possible attack from Russia. In 1884 Bismarck strengthened his position by persuading the three Emperors to confirm the *Kaiserbund* at Skiernewice. But the position was unstable, the interests of the Triple Alliance and the *Kaiserbund* were not identical and, in the event of war, the goodwill of Britain might prove the deciding factor. While recent events in Angra Pequena and Zanzibar had led Bismarck to suggest to Turkey that she should close the Dardanelles if war broke out between Britain and Russia and to offer France diplomatic support in Egypt, he felt that the chance of securing the friendship of Britain must not be recklessly thrown away. His policy towards this country was somewhat erratic. Sometimes his attitude, particularly in regard to colonial problems, was unsympathetic; at other times he did all he could to induce Salisbury to make an alliance with Austria in the hope that if their conflicting interests in the Balkans led to war between Austria and Russia, Great Britain would support the former while Germany looked on. Salisbury flatly refused to adopt a policy by which Germany would obviously profit. Nor would he join the Triple Alliance although in 1887 he, to some extent, abandoned the policy of isolation by making, not an alliance, but an agreement with Austria, Germany and Italy to maintain the *status quo* in the Mediterranean and Baltic Seas. But his action did not commit Great Britain to anything more than friendly co-operation and when Italy, who

viewed with distrust the extension of the power of France in Tunis, pressed him to make a closer alliance he refused because 'England never promises material assistance in view of an uncertain war'.

The Triple Alliance was renewed in February 1887. In June 1887 Bismarck made a second Reinsurance Treaty with **Bismarck and Russia** Russia providing that if one country went to war the other should observe benevolent neutrality. The result of this treaty was seen in the early support Bismarck gave to Alexander III's policy in Bulgaria, where Russian intrigue and Bulgarian stubbornness had led to chaos. After Russia had compelled Prince Alexander of Battenberg to abdicate, the throne had been offered in 1887 to Prince Ferdinand of Coburg. Russia resisted the election of Ferdinand who was supported by Great Britain and Austria. In February 1888 Bismarck warned Russia that a war against Austria would probably mean war with Germany. At Salisbury's suggestion the Powers refused to support Russia's demand that a protest against Ferdinand's election should be sent to the Sultan, the suzerain of Bulgaria, and Ferdinand kept his throne. Great Britain had reason to regret her action when, in 1915, Ferdinand joined Germany and Austria in the Great War.

The 'Old' Emperor William I died on March 9th, 1888, his son the Emperor Frederick died on June 15th and William

**Proposed Alliance between Great Britain and Germany, 1889** II became German Emperor. The impulsive character of the young Emperor and the unfriendly attitude he had taken up towards Great Britain filled Salisbury with apprehension for the future.

'I can see the sea covered with white horses.' But Bismarck was still haunted by the fear of a French invasion. He was greatly perturbed by the policy of General Boulanger who had been Minister of War. Boulanger, who received substantial financial support from the Duchesse d'Uzès and other leading Monarchists, formed a National party which aimed at suppressing the Republic, and it is possible that Boulanger wished to become head of the state. The movement appeared dangerous to Germany and the election of Boulanger as deputy for Paris in 1889 seemed to make the

danger acute. Bismarck knew that Britain had very serious difficulties not only, as usual, with Russia and France, but also with the United States. He thought the moment was opportune for another attempt to make an alliance between Great Britain and Germany. In January 1889 he instructed Count Hatzfeldt, the German ambassador in London, to try to induce Salisbury to conclude an alliance which would protect Germany and Great Britain from an attack on either by France. But no offer was made of German help if Russia attacked Great Britain. Salisbury courteously declined the offer because British public opinion would not sanction 'an engagement to make war upon a neighbouring country upon an issue not only unarrived but undefined; and in which, when it did arrive, England might prove to have no concern'. Chamberlain, in a conversation with the Austrian ambassador, said that Britain would not pull the chestnuts out of the fire for Germany, and roundly declared 'We cannot trust Bismarck'.

In spite of this rebuff Bismarck remained on friendly terms with Great Britain. It is possible that his refusal to renew the Reinsurance Treaty with Russia, which expired in 1890, was due to a desire to maintain friendship with this country. It is certain that in 1891 when the Triple Alliance was renewed Italy and Austria did all they could to induce Great Britain to join. But Salisbury again refused.

Salisbury, who like Castlereagh, was not only a British but a European statesman, readily co-operated with any attempts *The Concert of Europe, 1885-6* to make the Concert of Europe effective, and Rosebery, who was Foreign Secretary in Gladstone's

Third Ministry from February to August 1886, adopted the same policy. Great Britain was one of the Powers who, in 1885, compelled Serbia and Bulgaria to make peace. In April 1886 she was a party to the recognition by the leading states of Europe of 'the Prince of Bulgaria' as governor of Eastern Roumelia and joined in compelling Turkey and Bulgaria to cancel an agreement they had made for mutual military aid. In May Rosebery sent a squadron to blockade the Greek ports and thus compelled Greece to renounce her intention again to attack Turkey. But in June

of the same year, in spite of Rosebery's efforts, the Concert failed to prevent the Czar Alexander III of Russia from breaking the clause of the Treaty of Berlin which prohibited Russia from fortifying Batoum.

Salisbury's steady opposition to the slave trade was in accordance with the best tradition of British foreign policy. At his suggestion representatives of seventeen states attended a Conference at Brussels in 1889 and 1890 which laid down regulations for the outlawing of the slave trade.

The general result of the somewhat complicated diplomacy of the time was<sup>1</sup> that when Bismarck fell from power in March 1890 the states of Europe were divided into two groups. Germany, Italy, Great Britain and Spain were standing on guard against France; Austria, Italy, Great Britain and Roumania were united by common interest against Russia.

Salisbury had helped to maintain peace between the Powers and had secured for Great Britain an influential position in Europe. But foreign relations were profoundly affected by the general scramble for colonies which reached its height during this ministry.

In Africa the eagerness of explorers to make political treaties with native chiefs and the great difficulty of delimiting frontiers proved fruitful sources of discord.

In May 1887 the Sultan of Zanzibar had granted to the British East African Company a lease of the northern part *East Africa*, of his possessions on the mainland, and in the *1886-90* following year he made a similar grant to the German East African Company of the southern portion. The administration of the German Company had led to a revolt of the Arabs and in 1890 the German government assumed control. The Germans now advanced claims which, if conceded, would have given them command of the southern end of the Nile Valley. Karl Peters, in March 1890, had concluded a treaty with the King of Uganda which made that country a German protectorate in spite of the fact that H. M. Stanley had already established a British claim to suzerainty by a similar treaty. Germany claimed as the hinterland of German East Africa, the whole territory between the coast

<sup>1</sup> Pribram, *England and Europe, 1871-1914*, p. 46.

on the East and the Congo Free State on the West. Great Britain resisted the claim not only because it involved German domination in the Nile Valley but because it was a direct challenge to the rights which she had acquired owing to the work of Cecil Rhodes in Northern Rhodesia and of Sir Harry Johnston in Nyasaland. A German protectorate had been set up in Witu in 1886 and this prevented the expansion of the British Colony along the coast and gave Germany another claim on Uganda as the hinterland of Witu.

Difficulties had also arisen in regard to Samoa where the German and British consuls strove to secure all possible advantages for their respective countries. King Samoa, 1889 Malietoa favoured Britain and the attempt of the German consul to replace him by a supporter of Germany led to civil war. The over-zealous German consul was withdrawn by Bismarck, and in 1889 an agreement between Great Britain, the United States and Germany provided that Samoa should be an independent kingdom under the rule of Malietoa and that the three foreign powers should have equal rights in the island.

The much-discussed treaty of 1890 led to a settlement. By that treaty Germany agreed that Zanzibar should be a British protectorate and gave up all claim to Witu, Uganda and Nyasaland ; Britain consented to a slight extension of the German colony of Togoland and gave Germany access to the River Zambesi. Britain also ceded Heligoland, which had become of importance to Germany as it commanded the entrance to the Kiel Canal. The treaty displeased extremists in both countries. Many Germans failed to realize the naval importance of Heligoland and resented the loss of the colonies which the courage and endurance of such explorers as Peters had helped to found. 'Germany', they said, 'has given two kingdoms in exchange for a bath tub'. Queen Victoria and many of her subjects condemned the first cession of any portion of the British Empire which had been made in time of peace, and particularly regretted the loss of a naval base so near to the English coast. Salisbury pointed out that under this arrangement 'the whole of (Africa) outside the confines of Abyssinia and Gallaland will

be under British influence up to Khartoum'. Britain had gained a considerable increase in territory and had maintained her hold on the Nile Valley. But she was to find Heligoland a thorn in the flesh in the Great War.

France and Great Britain were at issue in Africa, America and the Pacific Ocean.

The French had gradually strengthened their influence in Madagascar and English traders resented the serious losses <sup>Madagascar</sup> they were suffering owing to the adoption of protection which formed an important feature of French colonial policy. In December 1885 a treaty was concluded which gave to France a large measure of control over the foreign policy of the island.

In Northern Africa the French aimed at extending their territory eastward from Senegal to the Nile. Between 1882 <sup>France and the Sahara</sup> and 1885 the French strengthened their influence along the River Senegal and secured access to Lake Tchad. They thus obtained much of the hinterland of the British colonies of Gambia, Sierra Leone and the Gold Coast. The development of these colonies was hampered by the fact that they found themselves confined between the sea and the territory which France had recently acquired. The rivalry of the Royal Niger Company, which was founded in 1882 to maintain British influence, somewhat hindered the operations of the French, but by 1890 they had greatly improved their position in the Sahara.

In 1890 the French, who in 1862 had agreed with Great Britain to recognize the independence of the Sultan of Zanzibar, demanded compensation for the British protectorate which had just been established in <sup>Franco-British Treaty, 1890</sup> that country.<sup>1</sup> A colonial agreement was made. The French recognized the British protectorate in Zanzibar and the supremacy which the activity of the Royal Niger Company had secured for Great Britain in the Haussa states. Salisbury recognized the French protectorate in Madagascar, which had been virtually established by the treaty of December 1885, and accepted the hinterland of Algeria as coming within the French sphere of influence. His 'graceful con-

<sup>1</sup> p. 101.

'cession' was prompted by a desire to establish better relations between France and England which were now on terms of bitter hostility. But it failed to effect this purpose because of serious differences that remained as to the administration of Egypt and the fishing rights claimed by French fishermen in Newfoundland. It was adversely criticized on the ground that Salisbury had ceded much without securing any advantages for Great Britain. Although the agreement failed in its primary object of improving the relations between the two countries it is doubtful if Great Britain really lost much. The French protectorate had already been established in Madagascar in fact if not in name, and the new arrangement explicitly protected the rights which had been secured for British traders by former treaties in Madagascar ; the hinter-land of Algeria was largely desert. The attempt of the French to stop the development of the British colonies on the West coast of Africa was checked.

The French were endeavouring to make Northern Africa into a great French Empire extending from the Congo to the Mediterranean and from the Senegal to the Nile.  
**France and Egypt, 1887** The British occupation of Egypt and the attempt to establish the influence of Great Britain in the whole of the Nile Valley seemed certain to prevent the colonial expansion at which France was aiming. In Egypt, therefore, France continued her policy of factious opposition, which Salisbury justly described as 'pure cussedness'. But Sir Evelyn Baring's brilliant financial policy proved successful in spite of the efforts of France to thwart it by exercising her right to criticize the financial policy of Egypt, and improvement in finances meant that money was at last available for equipping the Egyptian army which British sergeant-majors were gradually making into an efficient fighting force.

In 1887 an attempt made by France to weaken the authority of Great Britain in Egypt produced the opposite effect. France particularly resented the presence of the British army of occupation, and in January 1887 Salisbury sent Sir H. Drummond Wolff to Constantinople to arrange with the Sultan satisfactory conditions for its withdrawal. An agreement was concluded between Turkey and Great Britain which provided

that the British army should be withdrawn after three years, but that Great Britain should 'retain a treaty right of intervention if at any time either internal peace or external security should be seriously threatened'. Salisbury felt that a longer occupation was desirable in the interests of Egypt, but he was anxious to free Great Britain from her engagements in Egypt which infuriated France and gave Bismarck an opportunity of fishing in troubled waters. But he insisted on the right of intervention and re-entry in order to prevent the collapse of the system which, to the great benefit of the people, Great Britain had established in Egypt. But France objected to the right of intervention which Salisbury claimed and put such pressure upon the Sultan that he refused to ratify the Convention. The only result of the action of France was that the British occupation of Egypt was indefinitely prolonged.

Circumstances soon arose that showed that Egypt was still dependent upon British support. In 1888 the Khalifa, who had succeeded the Mahdi, having established his power in the Southern Soudan, determined to conquer Egyptian territory and attacked Suakin, the only town in the Eastern Soudan which the Khedive had retained after the death of Gordon. The Khalifa's forces were routed outside Suakin on December 21st by a mixed force of British and Egyptian troops. The Khalifa made another attempt in 1889, but his army was defeated at Toski. The British sergeant-majors had done their work well and the remodelled Egyptian army proved its worth. But it was clear that the Khalifa was still determined to extend his territory at the expense of Egypt, and this constant danger, together with the utter incapacity of the ruling classes in Egypt, made the continuance of the British occupation essential for the safety of the country. By inducing the Sultan to reject the Convention of 1887 the French had rendered valuable service to Egypt.

Somaliland gave France another opportunity of inflicting a pin prick upon the British lion. A naval officer ran up the French flag at Dongarita, a desolate spot on the coast of Somaliland where the Union Jack was already flying. This

little difficulty was solved by the action of a wandering native who stole both the flags.

Further differences arose between France and Great Britain about the New Hebrides, Morocco and Newfoundland.

In 1878 the respective governments had agreed that neither should occupy the New Hebrides. But quarrels arose between

**The New  
Hebrides,  
1886-8** French and British traders and in June 1886 the French landed troops to protect their countrymen.

Further trouble was caused by disputes as to land between the French Hebrides Company and the native Christian mission, and Australia protested strongly against the attempt of France to extend her influence in the Pacific. The French were reluctant to withdraw their troops but yielded to Salisbury's representations and evacuated the islands in March 1888.

The extension of French authority in the Eastern Mediterranean largely accounts for the suspicion with which she was regarded by Italy who, in 1887, had vainly tried to induce Great Britain to join the Triple Alliance and thus to secure her aid if war broke out between Italy and France. Great Britain carried on a considerable trade with Morocco and viewed with apprehension the growth of French influence in that country, not only because British trade was likely to suffer seriously but also because, if France secured Tangier, she would challenge the command of the Straits of Gibraltar which Great Britain possessed.

The problem of the fishing rights which the French claimed in Newfoundland was much more serious. By the Treaty of Utrecht, 1713, the island had been ceded to Great Britain, but permission was given to French fishermen to use a strip of coast known as the 'Treaty Shore', to dry the cod they had caught. In accordance with its policy of protection the French government decided to give bounties on any cod caught by French fishermen on the Banks of Newfoundland and sold to foreign countries. These bounties greatly injured the British fishing trade and in reprisal the legislature of Newfoundland forbade the French to catch bait in their waters. The bitter feeling that was caused by the grant of bounties on the one hand and by the Bait Bill on

the other was exasperated by a further dispute about lobsters. The French claimed the right of erecting huts on the Treaty Shore, in which they could tin the lobsters they caught. The British fishermen asserted that the Treaty of Utrecht gave no authority for the erection of such buildings and both parties destroyed the sheds erected by their opponents. The feeling in Newfoundland grew so bitter that the colonists began to talk of secession, but Salisbury in March 1891 persuaded the French government to refer the question to arbitration. But no arbitration resulted. British war vessels patrolled the sea and prevented any further disorder, but the dispute remained unsettled until the completion of the *Dual Entente* in 1904.

The provocative policy of France led Salisbury to declare in 1887 that 'for the present the enemy is France', and, unofficially, to hope that a new Franco-German war might provide another field of action for French diplomacy.

In the South of Africa the interests of Portugal clashed with those of Great Britain. Portugal claimed sovereignty over **Portugal and** the Zambesi valley on the ground of grants made **Great Britain** by native chiefs two centuries or more ago. In virtue of these grants Portugal tried to prevent the vessels of any other nations from navigating the Zambesi, and asserted that parts of Nyasaland and Mashonaland were Portuguese territory. Nyasaland and Mashonaland were occupied by British traders and missionaries, and such occupation established a title of British possession; pioneers from the South, inspired by Cecil Rhodes, were endeavouring to secure for Great Britain the Cape to Cairo route from the South to the North of Africa. The policy of the Portuguese, who failed effectively to occupy the land they claimed, would, if successful, have set a barrier to the expansion of British South Africa. In December 1889 matters came to a head. In that month Major Serpa Pinto, a Portuguese officer, required the Makololos, who were under British protection, to acknowledge the sovereignty of Portugal. When they refused he shot them down with Gatling guns. A British naval demonstration was made off Mozambique and, in accordance with a summary demand from Salisbury, Pinto's expedition was recalled.

The Portuguese felt some difficulty in accepting the terms of agreement that Salisbury offered because they feared that any cession of territory might lead to a revolution in Lisbon, but, after some delay, a final settlement was made in June 1891 by which the rights of Great Britain to hold Nyasaland and Mashonaland and to extend her possessions northward from Nyasaland were acknowledged. Portugal secured new territory west of Lake Nyasa ; the frontier of Mashonaland was settled and Portugal agreed that the navigation of the Zambesi should be free to all nations.

Italy too was sharing in the Scramble for Africa. In 1884 she secured a large part of Southern Somaliland and, in 1885, Italy and Kassala, 1891 occupied Massowah, a port on the Red Sea. She wished to extend westward and to occupy Kassala which stood on a tributary of the Nile. But British control of the Nile valley was a cardinal point of Salisbury's African policy and in February 1891 he induced the Italians to acknowledge that Kassala was Egyptian territory.

Relations between Great Britain and the United States were anything but cordial. In 1888 the British representative, Sackville-West, who had unwisely expressed an opinion that President Cleveland should be re-elected, was summarily dismissed from Washington. The post remained vacant for six months when Sir Julian Pauncefote was appointed.

A serious difference arose between the United States and Great Britain with regard to the seal fisheries in the Behring Sea. The United States had purchased Alaska from Russia in 1867 and had strictly confined to its own nationals the right of killing seals on their breeding-place, the Pribyloff Islands. But many seals were killed in the open sea by hunters from British Columbia, and the Americans asserted that such havoc was wrought that the seals would soon be exterminated. The Canadians took no notice of these protests, the truth of which they denied. The Americans then claimed that the whole of the Behring Sea was American and their cruisers seized some Canadian sealing vessels on the ground that they were poaching in American waters. Salisbury strongly protested against the claim and a British squadron was sent to the Behring Sea. The danger of a

naval encounter was obviated by the fact that no American warships were sent at the same time. After prolonged negotiation an Arbitration Treaty was made in February 1892 between Great Britain and the United States. The Arbitration Court, in August 1893, rejected the American claim to the ownership of the Behring Sea, and made regulations forbidding sealing within sixty miles of the Pribyloff Islands and protecting the seals from indiscriminate slaughter.

The Tories were defeated in the election of July 1892 and Salisbury resigned office on August 12th.

His period at the Foreign Office, although a time of great difficulty, had been very successful. He had carried into ~~Salisbury's Foreign Policy~~ effect his firm conviction that 'Britain's greatest interest is peace'. Although the relations between Great Britain and other states had at times become strained he had avoided war, except in the Soudan. He had done much to settle the problems that arose from the Scramble for Africa. He had shown himself capable of resolute action, and his prompt dispatch of British warships to Mozambique and the Behring Sea had been justified by the result. But the problem of Egypt hampered his action and the danger that other states, and particularly Germany, might co-operate with France compelled him to walk warily, and to adopt a policy of graceful concession. The Treaty he made with Germany in 1890 was a statesmanlike measure; the Treaty he made with France was regarded unjustly by many as a weak concession to an ungrateful rival. In 1885 he found Great Britain somewhat discredited; in 1892 she had again become one of the leading powers of Europe with absolute liberty of action, and the mistress of a vast and growing Empire.

## CHAPTER X

### THE END OF ISOLATION

**I**N the beginning of the last decade of the nineteenth century an important change took place in British Foreign Policy. Up to that time foreign policy had been dependent to some extent upon party principles. Henceforth it was generally regarded as continuous, and Lord Rosebery, who was Foreign Minister from 1892 to 1894 and Liberal Prime Minister from March 1894 to June 1895, endeavoured to carry out the principles of Lord Salisbury. The latter became Prime Minister for the third time in June 1895 and held office until 1902 when he retired and was succeeded by his nephew Arthur James Balfour.

Salisbury again proved his ability as a Foreign Minister but after his absence from the Foreign Office from July 1892 to June 1895 he never quite recovered the commanding position he had held in Europe in 1892, and the Foreign Policy of his third ministry proved less successful than that of his second.

From 1894 to 1896 Great Britain attempted to revive the Concert of Europe in order to save the Armenians from Turkish oppression. The Sultan was bound by the Treaty of Berlin to reform the government of Armenia; in the Convention of Cyprus, made between Turkey and Great Britain on June 4th, 1878, he had definitely given a promise to protect Armenian Christians in return for a promise of British support if Russia attacked his Asiatic dominions. The Sultan had, as usual, broken his promises. On the plea that the Armenians were anarchists and revolutionists he had sanctioned wholesale massacre; in the two years 1893–5 one hundred thousand Armenians had been murdered, ‘they were absolutely hunted

**The Concert  
of Europe  
and the  
Armenians,  
1894–6**

like wild beasts, being killed wherever they were found'. Lord Kimberley, Foreign Secretary 1894-5, rightly thought that the Powers ought to intervene as the Treaty of Berlin had been broken, while Great Britain had definitely guaranteed the safety of the Armenians and was under a special obligation to protect them. But Kimberley's efforts failed. Russia, which objected to the establishment of an independent Christian state in Asia Minor, refused to interfere, and the Sultan treated with disdain the mild representations of the other Powers. Many held that as joint action was impossible Britain was bound, by the terms of the Cyprus Convention, to interfere alone, but Rosebery declined to take this course which would have led to strong opposition from Russia and, possibly, from other Powers. Owing to Salisbury's insistence a scheme of reform which entrusted the supervision of Armenia to mixed tribunals of Europeans and Turks was drawn up. The Sultan prevented it from being put into execution and although Salisbury persuaded France, Germany, Austria, Italy and even Russia to agree to force the Sultan to carry out his undertakings, nothing was done. All attempts to secure united and effective action by the Powers had failed; five thousand Armenians were massacred in Constantinople in 1896; 'this so-called European Concert', said an Austrian statesman, 'is become a children's laughing-stock'.

By the Treaty of Berlin Turkey was bound to introduce reforms into all her dominions including Crete, but in 1895 <sup>Crete, 1895-8</sup> continued misgovernment led to a revolt in that island. The Cretans refused to accept a scheme of reform which was drawn up by the Powers. Colonel Vassos declared that Crete had become a part of the Kingdom of Greece and a small Greek army was sent to support the rebels. The action of the Greeks was a flagrant violation of the Treaty of Berlin and the Powers applied to Greece the compulsion they had failed to use against Russia in 1886 and Turkey in 1896. The Allied fleets blockaded the Greek coast in March 1897, although Salisbury agreed to the blockade with reluctance. But the Greeks held out in Crete and Turkey formally declared war on Greece on April 18th, 1897. The Greeks were utterly routed but, through the insistence of Salisbury, the

Powers saved the Greeks from a considerable loss of territory and compelled the Sultan to accept the terms of peace which they imposed. The Kaiser, William II, had recently rejected a suggestion that Salisbury had made for the division of the Sultan's dominions. He now inclined to an agreement with Turkey and left the Cretan question to the other Powers who generally followed the lead of Salisbury ; in September 1898 Great Britain, France, Russia and Italy compelled the Turks to evacuate Crete. The Powers now introduced a new constitution for the island and on December 21st, 1898, on their invitation, Prince George of Greece became High Commissioner of Crete.

In view of future history the relations between Great Britain and Germany at the end of the nineteenth century were of **Germany and** considerable importance. British Foreign Policy **Great Britain** was still hampered by the old difficulties with France and Russia ; the Scramble for China, in which Great Britain, Germany, France and Russia participated, was proving an additional complication. Commercial rivalry and differences arising from colonial expansion continued to cause hostility between Great Britain and Germany and the desire of Germany to establish an agreement with Turkey provoked some apprehension in England. Each country distrusted the other and viewed with suspicion any attempt to establish better relations. But while the interests of the two countries clashed in some respects, in others their interests coincided. Both feared France and the growing friendship between France and Russia tended to weaken the connexion which Bismarck had laboured to maintain between the latter country and Germany, and made Germany appreciate the value of Great Britain as a potential ally. Great Britain realized that if she could establish a good understanding with Germany she would be able better to check the policy of pinpricks in which France persisted.

On December 27th, 1893, France and Russia made the *Dual Entente* which provided for united action by both Powers if either was attacked by Germany. Europe was now divided into two armed camps. Great Britain remained independent, but Rosebery, fearing that serious trouble might arise with

France, was anxious to establish better relations with Germany and hinted that Great Britain might join the Triple Alliance. Austria and Italy strongly favoured the proposed extension of the Alliance, but suspicion on the part of Great Britain and Germany prevented the fulfilment of Rosebery's desire. Germany, whose relations with France had recently improved, now feared that if Great Britain as a member of the Alliance went to war with Russia, she would expect more help than Germany would feel justified in giving. Without the assurance of the effective aid of Germany, Austria and Italy Rosebery felt unable to take any further steps.

Germany was aggrieved because Great Britain had not given her any help in Samoa where another rebellion broke out against King Malietoa in 1893.

Great Britain continued to increase her territory in South Africa. The aggression of the warlike Matabele, who had invaded Mashonaland, led to the conquest of Matabeleland and the occupation of Buluwayo on November 3rd, 1893, during Gladstone's Fourth Ministry. The final submission of the Matabele was due largely to the courage and statesmanship of Cecil Rhodes who went unarmed into the Matabele camp and persuaded King Lobengula to surrender. On April 12th, 1894, Rosebery proclaimed a British Protectorate over Uganda and thus secured a most important district which was the key of Central Africa and commanded the basin of the Lower Nile. The extension of British influence aroused the suspicion of France and Germany; they compelled Great Britain to cancel a treaty she had made with Belgium in 1894 by which union would have been effected between British East Africa and Uganda. Germany, too, had prevented the Chartered Company of South Africa from securing control of the Pretoria-Lorenzo-Marques Railway and thus ensuring an easy outlet on the sea for the produce of Rhodesia and Mashonaland. Germany now showed a desire for a better agreement with Russia and her new policy was a direct menace to Great Britain, for Nicholas II, who had succeeded Alexander III in 1894, was distinctly hostile to this country and declared that 'every Englishman is a sheeny'. France and Germany were now

more friendly than they had been since the Franco-German War. In 1894 they made a treaty which settled some differences that had arisen between them in the Cameroons ; in June 1895 some French warships took part in the ceremonies with which the Kiel Canal was opened. The Kaiser visited England in 1895, but conversations between him and Salisbury made matters worse, for the two men cordially disliked each other and impaired the harmony of Cowes regatta by a personal quarrel.

The isolation of Great Britain which had become dangerous rather than splendid, was emphasized by events in the Far Japan and East. Japan, which was on friendly terms with the Powers this country, had secured the Liao-Tung peninsula and other important concessions by the Treaty of Simonoseki which ended her successful war with China. France, Germany and Russia compelled Japan, on April 23rd, 1895, to give back to China the Liao-Tung peninsula, in spite of the strong opposition of Great Britain.

Germany proved particularly hostile in 1895. Salisbury made friendly overtures to France and Russia in the hope that German Hos. an agreement with the *Dual Entente* might diminish tility, 1895-6 the danger from Germany, but the attempt failed. By the end of December 1895 the Kaiser's animosity had reached such a pitch that, taking advantage of the feeling which had been aroused by the Jameson Raid, he tried to induce France and Russia to join Germany in an alliance against Great Britain. France and Russia refused his overtures and their refusal saved this country from grave danger. Very strong resentment was caused in England by the ill-considered telegram the Kaiser sent to President Krüger congratulating him on 'repelling with your own forces the armed bands which have broken into your country, and in maintaining the independence of your country against foreign aggression'.

In 1896 a remarkable change took place in the relations Germany becomes more friendly, 1896 between the two countries. The attempt of Italy to extend her influence in North East Africa was strongly opposed by Abyssinia. The Italians were completely routed at Adowa on March 1st, 1896, and

compelled to give up their attempt to form an Empire of Eritrea. It seemed likely that France would take advantage of the weakness of Italy to secure further territory in the Mediterranean, and that Russia would support France in any action she might take against Italy. Owing to this serious threat to the Triple Alliance the Kaiser again tried to induce Great Britain to become a member, primarily with a view to defending Italy against an attack from France. Salisbury again refused to make an alliance which might involve Great Britain in war in conditions which could not be accurately foreseen but which might prove to be unfavourable.

The Kaiser again attempted to form a Continental alliance against Great Britain and at the end of the year 'it actually appeared as if the Triple Alliance had coalesced with the Dual Alliance into a single block'.<sup>1</sup> But Bülow distrusted France, Austria hated Russia and the proposed alliance was not made. Such an alliance would have been particularly dangerous to Great Britain which was hopelessly at variance with Russia and France, and was busy with the difficult negotiations which preceded the Boer War.

Meanwhile Chamberlain, the energetic Colonial Secretary, was advocating an alliance with Germany, and some overtures to this end were made early in 1898. No alliance was made but Salisbury, who continued to oppose a definite alliance, effected an improvement in the relations between the two countries by the treaty of August 1898, by which Great Britain promised if the opportunity occurred to support the extension of German power in Mozambique and Angola, and by the treaty of November by which Great Britain agreed to withdraw her claims to Samoa which was to be divided between Germany and the United States. Again protests were made against Salisbury's graceful concessions but, although he failed to secure a considerable increase in British territory in compensation for the gains Germany had made, he gained a substantial advantage in the strong support which Germany gave to Great Britain when the Fashoda incident seemed likely to lead to war between her and France.

<sup>1</sup> Pribram, p. 65.

In 1898 Germany adopted a new policy which, although at the time it attracted little notice, was destined to prove one of the causes of the Great War. The need of protecting German trade and colonies necessitated the development of the German Navy. The Kaiser said, 'Our future lies on the seas', and declared 'I will never rest until I have raised my Navy to a position similar to that occupied by my army. German colonial aims can be gained only when Germany has become master of the ocean.' The completion of the Kiel Canal provided a German waterway between the Baltic and the North Seas; the Navy League was formed to advocate the creation of a strong navy, and in March 1897 the Reichstag, in spite of strong Socialist opposition, passed the first Navy Act.

In October 1899 the Boer War began, but by this time the position of Great Britain had been strengthened. France in March had settled the question of Fashoda; another treaty made with Russia in April had effected a temporary settlement of the problem of China. But strong sympathy with the Boers was felt in Europe, and, although the British Navy still commanded the seas, Chamberlain again felt that isolation had become dangerous rather than splendid. The renewal in 1899 of the *Dual Entente* between France and Russia was viewed with some alarm by Germany. Again the time appeared favourable for an alliance with Great Britain and, during a visit William II paid to Queen Victoria in November 1899, he and Bülow led Chamberlain to believe that they would welcome an alliance of Great Britain with Germany and the United States, which would check the designs of Russia in the Far and Middle East. Chamberlain therefore declared in a public speech at Leicester that permanent isolation had become impossible and that 'the most natural alliance' for Britain to make would be with Germany. But German feeling proved so strongly hostile to the suggestion that Bülow, in spite of the assurances he had lately given Chamberlain, declared in the Reichstag that the Triple Alliance must be maintained unchanged and that Germany must continue to pursue a policy of friendship with Russia. Chamberlain was naturally annoyed by this glaring

breach of faith but, in view of the incompatibility of British interests with those of both Russia and France, Bülow, on further consideration, felt that an alliance with Great Britain might involve Germany in a war with the *Dual Entente* and this opinion, and the pronounced hostility of the German people to Britain, were probably the real reasons for his change of attitude. That hostility was increased by adverse criticism passed by the Prince of Wales on the Kaiser and by the detention of the German mailsteamer *Bundesrat* on a charge, which proved incorrect, of carrying contraband of war to the Boers. The release of the *Bundesrat* and the payment of compensation averted serious consequences, but the Navy League made the most of the incident and in June 1900 Admiral von Tirpitz, the Secretary for the Navy, induced the Reichstag to pass a Navy Act which would double the navy by 1920. The Socialists, led by Bebel, in vain opposed the Act on the ground that it would cause serious friction with Great Britain which would regard such an increase in the German Navy as a challenge to the supremacy of the seas which Great Britain had hitherto held.

The years 1900–02 gave further examples of the somewhat bewildering alternation of agreement and discord which marked the relations between Great Britain and Germany. Common fear of the aggression of Russia in the Far East led the two countries to conclude an agreement in October 1900 to maintain the integrity of the Chinese Empire. But when Great Britain asked Germany to join in opposing Russian aggression in Manchuria the latter refused, on the ground that as Manchuria lay north of the Great Wall, it was not included in the recent agreement. Strong feeling was aroused in England by what was regarded as another breach of faith on the part of Germany.

The Boer War intensified the bad feeling between Germany and Great Britain. German newspapers vigorously attacked **Germany and the British policy**, English journals retorted with **the Boer War** no less vigour. Many German volunteers fought in the Boer army. German newspapers strongly condemned the concentration camps, in which many civilian Boers were interned, and unfairly criticized the conduct of British soldiers.

Chamberlain asserted, in a speech at Edinburgh, that the British troops showed far more humanity than the Germans had done in the Franco-German War. The Germans regarded their army as perfect in every way and Chamberlain's criticism, although absolutely true, provoked the German Press to transports of fury.

But the German government, although it did not stop the criticisms of British troops, which it knew to be unjust, generally maintained strict neutrality. It refused suggestions for intervention on behalf of the Boers which were twice made by Russia. It offered friendly mediation. When President Krüger visited Europe to secure help for the Boers he was welcomed by the French President and Queen Wilhelmina of Holland. The Kaiser absolutely refused to receive him.

British troops served under Count Waldersee against the Boxers who aimed at expelling all 'foreign devils' from China. But the allocation of the compensation paid by the Chinese government for losses inflicted on the property of Europeans led to some friction between Great Britain and Germany.

A most favourable impression was created by the attendance of William II at the funeral of Queen Victoria in January 1901, <sup>Chamberlain and an Alliance with Germany, 1901</sup> and by the real affection he displayed for his grandmother. The occasion led to renewed negotiations for an alliance between the Triple Alliance, Great Britain and possibly Japan. Chamberlain thought that as Russia was pursuing her designs on Manchuria, France was strengthening her influence in Morocco, and Great Britain was at variance with the United States, such an alliance was desirable for Europe in general and Great Britain in particular, and he was strongly supported by the Duke of Devonshire. But Salisbury feared that such an alliance would involve this country in wars in which she had little interest, and remained firm to the principle of isolation which he had consistently advocated. The friendly atmosphere which the Kaiser had recently created was dissipated when that impetuous monarch declared that the British ministers were 'unmitigated *noodles*'. The negotiations came to an end and Chamberlain

saw that any attempt to form an alliance with Germany was doomed to failure.

Relations between Great Britain and France remained dangerously unfriendly, particularly in Africa which Salisbury declared to be 'the plague spot of the Foreign Office'.

By 1896 the Egyptian army, strengthened by a considerable number of British troops, had become an effective fighting force <sup>The Khalifa defeated, 1898</sup> and the construction of the Soudan Military Rail-way, which would greatly facilitate operations against the Khalifa, was commenced. For some years the southern frontiers had been maintained, but now the Khedive felt that conditions were favourable for offensive operations. The British government gave its approval and promised financial support. While the main object was to crush the Khalifa, the expedition which ensued acted as a diversion on behalf of Italy, which was hard pressed in Abyssinia, and was a warning to France to abandon any designs she had on the Nile Valley. A series of successful operations, conducted with great military skill and remarkable administrative efficiency, ended in the utter rout of the Khalifa's army at Omdurman on September 2nd, 1898, by Sir Herbert Kitchener who occupied Khartoum the same day. A telegram of congratulation which the Kaiser sent to Kitchener was much appreciated in England.

The French had steadily strengthened their influence in Western Africa. They already held strong positions on the <sup>Fashoda, 1898</sup> Upper Niger ; the capture of Dahomey in 1893 had given them the command of the Lower Niger ; the occupation of Timbuktu by Joffre in 1894 established their position on the Middle Niger. This extension of the French colonial empire seriously prejudiced the British Colonies of Lagos, Gambia and the Gold Coast. France now proceeded to challenge the claim which Britain steadily advanced to the control of the Nile Valley. In 1894 Captain Marchand set out from the French Congo for the Valley of the Upper Nile. After a most intrepid march of three thousand miles he reached Fashoda in the Upper Nile Valley on July 10th, 1898, with a force of eight white men and eighty Senegalese troops

and hoisted the French flag. His action was a direct challenge to Great Britain. Great Britain in her recent agreements with Germany, Italy and the Congo Free State had asserted her sole right to influence in the Nile Valley. In 1895 Sir Edward Grey had stated definitely in the House of Commons that any attempt to encroach on the Nile Valley would be regarded as an unfriendly act. In 1897 Salisbury had informed the French that 'no European power other than Great Britain had a right to occupy any part of the Valley of the Nile'. On September 18th, 1898, Kitchener reached Fashoda with 25,000 men and his arrival probably saved Marchand's small force, which was in great straits for want of food, from annihilation by the Arabs. Kitchener supplied Marchand with the food he needed, hoisted the British and Egyptian flags and referred the whole question to the British government for settlement. Salisbury insisted that Fashoda was Egyptian territory which had been regained for its rightful sovereign by British troops, and enforced his opinion by stationing a strong naval squadron in the Channel. Delcassé yielded, fearing that persistence in the French claim to Fashoda would lead to a war between France and Great Britain which would make it more difficult for France to recover Alsace-Lorraine, and in the course of which the British fleet would capture the French Colonies. He therefore ordered Marchand to leave Fashoda and, on March 21st, 1899, France and Great Britain formally defined their respective spheres of influence in Africa and thus limited the possibility of a repetition of the Fashoda episode. In January 1899 Salisbury concluded a treaty with the Khedive which placed the Soudan under the joint government of Egypt and Great Britain, and provided that in all places except Suakin both the British and Egyptian flags should be flown. The settlement of the Egyptian question was regarded as a national humiliation in France and greatly increased the animosity felt for Great Britain. The strong sympathy expressed by the English newspapers for Captain Dreyfus who was unjustly cashiered and sent to penal servitude on a charge of treachery, still further exasperated the French.

On January 1st, 1886, Burma was added to the Crown

Colonies of Great Britain, much to the disappointment of France which had secured special privileges from King Theebaw and had hoped to establish supreme influence in the country. The French now endeavoured to extend their Indo-Chinese Empire by acquisitions from Siam which lay between Burma and French territory. France claimed that her influence extended as far as the Mekong River and in 1893 went to war with Siam to enforce her claim. Salisbury was anxious that Siam should continue strong and independent as it was a buffer state of the Indian Empire. In July 1893 Rosebery, to protect the interests of British residents, sent a British gunboat to Bangkok, which the French were blockading. The French thereupon raised the siege. Rosebery persuaded the Siamese to submit but resisted the French demand that the upper course of the Mekong should form the boundary between Siam and the French colonies Annam and Tong King. In 1896 Salisbury in the vain hope of conciliating France agreed to the French demands and also finally acknowledged the supremacy of France in Tunis.

Difficulties had arisen in Madagascar, which had been a French protectorate since 1890, owing to the introduction of prohibitive tariffs on British goods. Salisbury strongly protested on the ground that these were contrary to the terms of treaties made between Great Britain and Madagascar, but the French ignored his protests and in 1896 annexed Madagascar. They continued their policy of prohibition and British trade suffered very seriously in consequence.

During Salisbury's Third Ministry further difficulties arose with the United States. The question of the Behring Sea seal fisheries had been settled in 1893. For many years Venezuela had been at issue with Great Britain as to the exact boundary between the former state and British Guiana. The question became serious in 1895 when President Cleveland asserted that Great Britain was breaking the Monroe Doctrine by trying to secure land belonging to Venezuela, and maintained that the right of deciding the question at issue rested with the United States.

He demanded that the question should be referred to a Commission whose findings would be 'imposed upon Great Britain by all the resources of the United States'. At one time war seemed probable, but Salisbury's conciliatory policy and the fear that a war would seriously injure American trade led to a more reasonable attitude on the part of the United States. The problem was referred to arbitration and the arbitrators awarded to Great Britain the greater part of the disputed area.

In 1898 war broke out between the United States and Spain about Cuba. Although Great Britain observed strict neutrality strong sympathy was felt for the <sup>Cuba, 1898</sup> American cause. Feeling on the Continent was strongly in favour of Spain, and Salisbury rendered real service to the United States by preventing the formation of a European Coalition to support Spain in the war.

A problem arose in connexion with the construction of the Panama Canal in which the United States was actively interested. In 1899 the necessary land had been acquired from Costa Rica and Nicaragua, but the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty of 1850 had provided that any means of communication across Central America should be under the joint control of Great Britain and the United States. By the Pauncefote-Hay Treaty of 1901 Great Britain waived her right of joint control and the United States were left free to proceed with the construction of the Canal. The friendly action of Great Britain following the strong sympathy felt in England for the United States during the Americo-Spanish War caused a distinct improvement in the relations between the two Powers. But a vague suggestion which was made by Chamberlain in 1898 that 'the Stars and Stripes should wave together over an Anglo-Saxon alliance', produced no effect although it received the strong support of Admiral Mahan.

Meanwhile events were taking place in the Far East which were destined to change the whole course of British Foreign Policy. The weakness of China had been revealed <sup>The Scramble for China</sup> in 1894 by the war with Japan, and the treaty of Simonoseki showed the possibility of dividing up a portion of the Chinese Empire. The opposition of the European

Powers, who did not include Great Britain, prevented Japan from securing territory on the mainland, but others hoped to be successful where Japan had not been allowed to succeed and the Scramble for China began. In January 1898 Germany, desiring a port on the Pacific as a station for her rapidly growing navy, obtained a lease of Kiaochou. In March of the same year Russia, who sought an ice-free port as the terminus of the Trans-Siberian Railway, secured a lease of Port Arthur. On April 22nd, 1898, France got from China a lease of the port of Kwangchouwan in the Province of Kwangtung for ninety-nine years. Great Britain carried on 80 per cent of the foreign trade of China, but, although anxious to maintain her commercial advantage, did not desire to secure territory. But owing to acquisitions made by Germany and Russia Salisbury changed his policy, and in July 1898 obtained a lease of Wei-Hai-Wei 'for so long a period as Port Arthur should remain in the occupation of Russia'; he also secured for ninety-nine years an extension of territory around Hong-Kong sufficiently wide to protect the town from bombardment from the land. He succeeded in preventing the alienation of more territory by dividing China into 'spheres of influence' of the various European Powers, each of which was to enjoy a monopoly of commerce in its own sphere. Great Britain's sphere included the Yang-tse-Kiang River. The settlement that Salisbury effected was of great importance. Rivalry in the Far East had so embittered the relations between the Great Powers that at one time it seemed as if the Scramble for China might lead to a general war. Salisbury had again helped to maintain the peace of Europe.

The Boxer Rising was due largely to national resentment at the increase of European influence in China, and on June 20th, 1900, **The Boxer Rising, 1900** the Boxers besieged the British Legation at Pekin in which many Europeans had taken refuge. This outrage led to a revival of the Concert of Europe which took the unusual form of a joint expedition under Count Waldersee. An international force, thanks largely to the gallant efforts of British and Japanese troops, raised the siege of the British Legation before Waldersee

arrived, and the suppression of the rising was followed by the confirmation of recent concessions to Europeans.

Salisbury had secured considerable commercial advantages for Great Britain, but he had failed to prevent Germany and Russia from obtaining a footing in China. He viewed the advance of Russia with grave suspicion, but his attempt to induce Germany to co-operate in checking it failed.<sup>1</sup>

The Boer War did not lead to the intervention of any of the Powers of Europe although Russia and, probably, France seriously contemplated forming a union of the European Powers to coerce Great Britain. The danger was dispelled owing to the strength of the British Navy and the correct, and at times friendly, attitude adopted by Germany.<sup>2</sup> But the war emphasized the hostility that was felt in most European countries towards Great Britain, and the possibility that some day she might have to face a combination of the Powers against which her navy could not afford adequate protection. Isolation had become dangerous and Great Britain must be strengthened by a close alliance with a nation strong enough to give military and naval support if necessary. No such ally could be found in Europe. Recent attempts to make an alliance with Germany had failed, and German statesmen now held that the interests of their country required more freedom of action than the limitations of an alliance would allow. British statesmen were viewing with increasing alarm the rapid growth of the German Navy and the serious threat of German commercial competition. France and Russia were obviously impossible allies. The United States remained somewhat ostentatiously aloof from European affairs. But Great Britain was on very friendly terms with Japan and had proved her friendship when she protested against the abrogation of the Treaty of Simonoseki in 1895.<sup>3</sup> Japan, like Great Britain, regarded with alarm the extension of Russian influence in the Far East, and the interests of the two nations were nowhere at serious variance. An 'Agreement', which was really an alliance, was concluded between the two countries on January 30th, 1902. The Agreement

<sup>1</sup> p. 117.

<sup>2</sup> p. 117.

<sup>3</sup> p. 113.

denied that either country had any aggressive designs against China ; if one of the two went to war with a single Power the other was to remain neutral ; if one of the two was at war with two Powers the other should give active support. The Agreement was to last for five years.

The Anglo-Japanese Agreement was the first general treaty of alliance which Great Britain had made since the Treaty of Friendship and Alliance was concluded with Portugal in 1373 although, and notably in the Crimean War, temporary alliances had been frequently made to achieve definite ends. It showed that even Salisbury had been compelled to realize that changing political conditions had rendered the policy of isolation no longer safe. The Alliance was a direct challenge to Russia and the *Dual Entente*, and Russia, which had succeeded in establishing better relations between France and Germany, now sounded Germany as to the possibility of forming a European Coalition against Great Britain. But the Kaiser again refused to fall in with the suggestion. The new Alliance aroused the fears of the United States which regarded Japan as a danger to American interests in the Pacific Ocean. But in spite of the opposition it aroused it gave to Great Britain the additional strength she needed in a time of weakness and danger.

In his third ministry Salisbury's skilful diplomacy had again succeeded in avoiding war with any European Power in

**Results of  
Salisbury's  
Foreign Policy** spite of serious differences with France, Russia and Germany. The peaceful partition of Africa was one of his greatest achievements. He gladly co-operated in the First Hague Conference in 1889, but the interests of Great Britain compelled him to instruct the British representatives to resist proposals that were made for the reduction of naval armaments, and for the limitation of the rights of belligerents to search neutral vessels in time of war. His policy was broadminded ; he did not haggle and was always willing to make small sacrifices to promote good feeling between nations. The graceful concessions he made to France in Siam and Madagascar were due to this object but failed to conciliate France. But when British interests were seriously challenged on the Zambesi and at

Fashoda he acted with vigour, determination and success. He was essentially a peace minister, but he firmly believed that 'willingness on a good cause to go to war is the best possible security for peace'.

He failed to check European aggression in China, and the Boer War compelled him to substitute the principle of alliance for that of isolation which had so long formed the foundation of British Foreign Policy in general, and his own policy in particular. His third ministry was not as successful as his second, but it must be remembered that between 1884 and 1896, the British Empire was increased by the addition of nearly three million square miles, with a population of forty-five million, and for that increase Salisbury and, to a less extent, Rosebery were responsible.

The success of his foreign policy was largely due to his personal character. His character revealed a happy combination of strength and moderation. He viewed problems from the point of view of Europe and not simply of Britain. He maintained the rights of Great Britain, but his wide outlook, his broadmindedness and his ability to appreciate the good points of his adversary's case account for the concessions he occasionally made.

He declared that his object was 'to perform our part with honour, to abstain from a meddling diplomacy, to uphold England's honour steadily and fearlessly'. He attained his object and not only proved himself one of the greatest of British Foreign Ministers but gained for himself a leading position among the statesmen of Europe.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE DUAL AND TRIPLE ENTENTES

**H**ER victory over the Boers and the Anglo-Japanese treaty of January 1902 had greatly strengthened the position of Great Britain, but she was still regarded with hostility by most of the nations of Europe and her relations with Germany, France and Russia continued difficult.

In 1902 Great Britain and Germany had established a joint blockade of the coast of Venezuela in reprisal for injuries done to British and German traders. But this joint action did nothing to promote a more friendly understanding between the two countries, for a section of the British Press violently denounced co-operation with Germany and its protests provoked great animosity in Berlin.

Great Britain and Germany were afraid of each other and, from 1902, fear made their foreign policy indecisive and inconsistent. Germany regarded the *Ententes* which Great Britain concluded with France and Russia as attempts to encircle her with a ring of enemies. She strove to meet her supposed danger sometimes by establishing better relations with Great Britain; sometimes by attempting to break up the *Ententes*, to secure the friendship of Russia and France and to leave Great Britain isolated. Great Britain feared that Germany was trying to become the dictator of Europe and found reason for her fear in the rapid growth of the German Navy. She therefore made the *Ententes*. But she refused to turn them into offensive and defensive alliances because she was sincerely anxious to remain at peace with Germany.

Great Britain resented the growing friendship of Germany

with Turkey which seemed to threaten British interests in **Germany** the Middle East. During a somewhat theatrical **and Turkey** tour that the Kaiser made in the Sultan's dominions in 1898 he assured the Mohammedans at Damascus that he would be their 'friend at all times'. The Turks returned the compliment by calling him Kaiser Hadji Mohammed Gulliamo and tracing his descent from Mohammed. But he got privileges far more substantial than a somewhat ludicrous title and a new, but hardly authentic, genealogical tree. In 1902 the Sultan granted concessions for the construction of the Baghdad Railway, which was intended to form part of a system stretching from Hamburg to the Persian Gulf in which Great Britain claimed a special interest. German diplomacy had been largely railway diplomacy; the railway if completed, would turn the flank of our Indian Empire and give Germany commercial control of Asia Minor. In 1903 the Germans invited British capitalists to assist in financing their new undertaking. The invitation was declined, but the refusal was a great mistake. By it Great Britain lost an opportunity of securing some control over the new railway and the refusal caused bad feeling in Berlin. A new tariff, adverse to Germany, which had been imposed on imports into Canada, caused further annoyance in German commercial circles.

But the main cause of the growing hostility between Great Britain and Germany was the naval policy of Germany. In **German Naval Policy** 1894 the former had adopted a Two Power Standard in order to be able, if necessary, to cope with the fleets of France and Russia which had recently united in a demonstration at Toulon. The growth of the German Navy<sup>1</sup> was accelerated in the early years of the nineteenth century and both Great Britain and Germany took part in a race in naval armaments. In 1905 Germany laid down her first Dreadnought and it was estimated that the naval expenditure of 1917 would show an increase of 50 per cent on that of 1905.

Both countries protested that their sole object was defence, neither country believed the statement of the other, and

<sup>1</sup> pp. 115, 116.

mutual suspicion poisoned the political atmosphere. In 1907 Great Britain, in which the growth of naval estimates caused great concern, urged that the problem of the mutual reduction of armaments should be referred to the Hague Tribunal. The refusal of Germany to accede to this proposal was a grave error.

In 1908 many feared that war with Germany had become inevitable. Sir Arthur Nicolson, the British ambassador at St. Petersburg, urged Sir Edward Grey to meet the danger by turning the *Ententes* between Great Britain, France and Russia into a close alliance, but Grey was sincerely anxious to conciliate Germany and refused to adopt a policy which the Liberal party, still distrustful of Russia, would be unwilling to accept. On November 23rd Lord Roberts made an important contribution to the subject in the House of Lords. 'Within a few hours' steaming of our coasts, there is a people numbering over sixty millions, our most active rivals in commerce and the greatest military power in the world, adding to an overwhelming military strength a naval force which she is resolutely and rapidly increasing, while we are taking no military precautions in response.' He urged that a strong army should be built up on the basis of compulsory military service, but, although the Lords accepted his proposal by seventy-two votes to thirty-two, the Liberal government refused to adopt it, partly owing to the heavy cost it involved, partly because it believed that Britain would find adequate protection in the British Navy.

Great Britain and Germany took opposite sides in some of the most important issues of the time. In July 1905, during the Russo-Japanese War, the Kaiser tried in the *German Anti-British Policy* 'Willy-Nicky' correspondence with Nicholas II, to stir up discord between Russia and Great Britain, now the ally of France. Although Germany had supplied coal to the Russian fleet he professed great indignation because, as he asserted, 'the naval battles fought by Togo are fought with Cardiff coal'. In December 1904 Germany promised to support Russia if the latter went to war with Great Britain. On July 24th, 1905, the Kaiser persuaded the impressionable

Czar to sign the Treaty of Björko by which Russia and Germany promised to help each other if necessary against any European state, and to conclude such a war by a joint and not a separate peace. But Witte, the Russian Foreign Minister, and the Russian Ambassador at Paris declared that the Treaty was incompatible with the *Dual Entente* and the Czar was compelled to repudiate it. Germany refused to join Great Britain and other Powers in carrying out the Mürsteg Punctuation of 1903 in which Russia and Austria, with the strong approval of Lansdowne, the British Foreign Secretary, had suggested that Macedonia should be divided into districts administered by foreign officials. Germany refused in 1906 to join the other Powers in blockading Mitylene to compel the Sultan to accept the Commission which had been appointed on the suggestion of Lansdowne to reorganize the finances of Macedonia. The support of Germany enabled Austria to annex Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1908 in spite of the strong protests of Great Britain, France and Russia.<sup>1</sup> In 1905 and 1911 Germany strenuously opposed the policy of the *Dual Entente* in Morocco.<sup>2</sup>

The personality of the Kaiser, whose explosive and erratic character found expression in unexpected, and sometimes contradictory, action increased the ill-will between Great Britain and Germany. The Kaiser had been on very bad terms with his uncle Edward VII, but when he visited England in 1907 the relations between the two monarchs seemed most friendly and the Kaiser declared that in visiting England he was 'coming home'. Immediately afterwards, he aroused great indignation by defying official etiquette and writing a private letter to Tweedmouth, the First Lord of the Admiralty, in which he criticized British naval policy. Further offence was given in October 1908 by the publication in the *Daily Telegraph* of an interview with the Kaiser who emphasized the bitter hostility which his subjects felt towards Great Britain, and practically asserted that he was the only friend that this country possessed in Germany. The visit of King Edward VII to the Czar Nicholas II at Reval in 1908 greatly annoyed the Kaiser who

<sup>1</sup> p. 135.

<sup>2</sup> pp. 132, 137.

feared that it portended united action against Germany by Great Britain, France and Russia. 'It seems,' he said, 'they wish to encircle and provoke us.'

In 1911 the relations between Great Britain and Germany were distinctly bad. Differences which had long alienated this country from Russia and France had been happily composed, but British statesmen viewed with grave distrust the development of German policy, particularly in regard to the navy and Turkey; commercial men were angry because cheap goods 'made in Germany' flooded the English market; the man in the street was convinced that Germany was 'the enemy'.

Delcassé, the French Foreign Minister, was bitterly hostile to Germany, whose policy seemed to threaten both France <sup>Delcassé and</sup> and Great Britain. In November 1902 he induced Lansdowne Italy to promise that she would remain neutral if France was attacked. He realized that the problem of the Nile Valley was finally settled, and showed wise statesmanship by seeking friendship with Great Britain and thus reversing the policy France had steadily pursued for many years. The British Foreign Minister was Lord Lansdowne who, after proving a failure at the War Office, had been transferred to the Foreign Office in November 1900. Lord Salisbury justified his action on the ground that Lansdowne had a perfect knowledge of French, but the explanation was deemed inadequate and the new appointment was most unpopular. It actually proved a conspicuous success. Lansdowne, whose mother was French, strongly desired friendship with France and had refused in 1901 the offer of the Sultan of Morocco to ensure the supremacy of Great Britain in his country. The task of establishing friendship between France and Great Britain was not easy. Bitter feeling had been aroused on both sides. President Loubet and the people of Paris had warmly welcomed President Krüger when he visited Europe. The memory of Fashoda still rankled. British criticism of the Dreyfus case had been very frank. The Press of both countries had inflamed bitter feeling and created a hostile atmosphere.

The retirement in July 1902 of Salisbury, the champion

of splendid isolation, improved the prospects of alliance with France. King Edward VII visited Paris in May 1903 and by his personal charm created a much better feeling towards Great Britain and thus greatly facilitated the plans of Delcassé. In July President Loubet and Delcassé returned the visit and received an enthusiastic welcome in London. In October the French and British governments agreed to refer all disputes to the Hague Tribunal for arbitration. Lansdowne and Paul Cambon, the French ambassador in London, co-operated heartily with Delcassé, and on April 8th, 1904, the *Entente Cordiale* was concluded between the two countries.

The *Entente*, an agreement between a Latin and a Teutonic country, was not an alliance but an understanding. It did not formally commit either nation to support the other in war, but the two Powers promised to give diplomatic support to each other in case of need. Differences which had long alienated the two countries were happily settled. The British recognized the rights of French fishermen to use the harbours on the Treaty Shore in Newfoundland and thus ended a dispute which had lasted nearly two centuries. The boundaries of the French Colonies of Senegambia and Nigeria were rectified to the advantage of France. Madagascar was finally recognized by Great Britain as a French possession, and the British settlements in Siam were accepted by France. But the most important clauses dealt with Egypt and Morocco. France gave Great Britain a free hand in Egypt, and withdrew her oft-repeated demand for a time-limit for the British occupation. France had taken advantage of the Boer War greatly to extend her influence in Morocco, although she declared that she did not wish to impair the authority of the Sultan. Great Britain undertook to offer no opposition to French policy in that country. The secret treaties which were made at the same time provided that if the Sultan failed to maintain his power Spain should receive part of Morocco and it was obvious that France would claim the rest. But Tangier was not to be fortified and thus Gibraltar would continue to command the Straits.

The *Entente Cordiale* greatly strengthened the *Dual Entente*

between France and Russia which had been weakened by the defeat of Russia in the Russo-Japanese War. Its value was soon shown, for the friendly offices of France contributed to the peaceful solution of the difference that arose between Great Britain and Russia when, on October 21st, 1904, the Russian fleet that was sailing to the Far East bombarded the Dogger Bank fishing-fleet and killed two British fishermen. The *Entente* was intended as a defensive measure, and Bülow said in the Reichstag 'from the point of view of German interests we have no objection to make to it'.

But the discovery of the secret clauses of the recent treaty alarmed Germany; she feared that France, who was now making further demands on the Sultan, would secure complete control of Morocco and use the position she acquired to handicap German trade. In March 1905 the Kaiser went to Tangier and asserted that the independence of the Sultan should be maintained, and that all nations should be put on a footing of 'absolute equality' with regard to Moroccan trade. Bülow demanded that a Conference of the Powers should be held to settle the position of Morocco, but Delcassé, who confidently expected that France would receive the armed support of Great Britain if she went to war with Germany, objected to any such conference. But his colleagues, through fear of war with Germany, agreed to Bülow's demand and Delcassé resigned. A European Conference met at Algeciras in January 1906 and the Powers, while asserting the independence of the Sultan, recognized the right of France to special authority in Morocco on condition that all countries should enjoy equal rights of trade. The result of the Conference was practically the reassertion of the Franco-British Treaty of 1904 and this result, which tightened the bonds of the *Entente Cordiale*, was largely due to the strong diplomatic support Great Britain had given to France.

By this time the position of Great Britain had been strengthened by the renewal of the Treaty with Japan for a further period of ten years. The Japanese now acknowledged the special claims of Great Britain on the Indian Frontier, and

each ally was to help the other if attacked by a single Power.

Conditions now seemed more favourable for an agreement between Great Britain and Russia. The recent defeat of **Great Britain** Russia by Japan had lessened the danger to British and Russia interests in the Far East. Russia now turned her attention once more to the Balkans, with which Great Britain was not seriously concerned. Both countries were on excellent terms with France ; both had many Mohammedan subjects and were suspicious of the designs of Germany on the Turkish Empire. But Russia regarded the revised Japano-British Treaty as aimed at herself and serious points of difference remained in the Middle East. Both countries were anxious to maintain their influence in Persia and in 1903 Great Britain resented the foundation of the Bank of Persia Loans, in which Russia had large interests, and the control of the custom houses of Northern Persia which Russia had secured. Both were endeavouring to secure influence in Tibet. Russia proposed to strengthen her own position by making a naval base in the Persian Gulf, where Great Britain claimed predominant power.

The Liberal party had long regarded Russia as the enemy of democracy, but were conciliated by the meeting of the **The 'Triple Entente', 1907** Duma in May 1906 which was regarded as the beginning of constitutional government. Largely owing to the skilful diplomacy of Sir Edward Grey<sup>1</sup> who, like all British ministers, made peace his great object, and in spite of the resentment which the dissolution of the Duma caused in England, an Agreement was made between Great Britain and Russia on August 31st, 1907. The two contracting parties agreed to respect the independence and integrity of Persia ; Northern Persia was recognized as a Russian sphere of influence, and the special interests of Great Britain in Southern Persia were admitted by Russia. Both countries agreed to abstain from interference in Tibet. The commerce of Russia benefited greatly from this treaty as Teheran and Ispahan came within the Russian sphere of influence. Great Britain secured an important strategical

<sup>1</sup> Lord Grey of Fallodon.

position which ensured the safety of North-Western India, and the fear of Russian aggression against the North-West Frontier, which had long been the nightmare of the British Foreign Office, was removed. The *Entente Cordiale* became the *Triple Entente* and relations between the Russian and British governments were greatly improved. But the Agreement was not popular in England or Russia. Lord Curzon asserted that in Afghanistan and Persia undue concessions had been made to Russia and complained that British predominance in the Persian Gulf had not been safeguarded. Neither Persia nor Afghanistan accepted the Agreement and events were soon to prove that Russia had not faithfully fulfilled her contract.

Germany considered that Great Britain, and King Edward VII in particular, were endeavouring to 'encircle' her. This **Results of the 'Triple Entente'** opinion was wrong, but the Russo-British Agreement of 1907 naturally strengthened it. The Agreement accelerated the race for armaments and led to the further development of the German Navy, and, in consequence, of the British. In 1907 Asquith's Liberal government decided to lay down four Dreadnoughts at once and an additional four if needed, and explicitly stated that this new departure was a countermove to the naval policy of Germany.

Italy was but a lukewarm member of the Triple Alliance. She had always been on friendly terms with Great Britain. Her relations with France had greatly improved owing to the recognition by France of her claim to predominance in Tripoli (1901) and the treaty of 1902<sup>1</sup> by which the two countries agreed that if one was attacked the other should remain neutral. But Russia was now on friendly terms with Serbia and Bulgaria, and Austria, which was most anxious to maintain her control of the Lower Danube, strongly objected to the extension of Russian influence in the Balkans.

The Russo-British treaty strengthened the friendly relations between Germany and Turkey, for the latter resented the alliance which Great Britain had formed with her inveterate

<sup>1</sup> p. 130.

enemy. It led to a closer alliance between Germany and Austria. Austria became, as the Kaiser said, Germany's 'only friend'. That alliance, the growth of the German Navy, and the sharply-cut division of Europe between the Triple Alliance and the *Triple Entente* were among the main causes of the Great War. All three measures were asserted to be purely defensive. The fact that such defensive measures were deemed necessary showed that the nerves of Europe were on edge and in such circumstances means of defence easily become offensive. The existence of the two antagonistic groups of states including all the Great Powers, showed that the Concert of Europe was incomplete and weakened the efforts that the Concert made from time to time to preserve peace.

Austria gained a notable success in 1908. In January Aehrenthal, the Foreign Minister, had secured from the Sultan

**Bosnia and Herzegovina**, of Novi-Bazar which would link up Vienna and 1908 the right to make a railway through the Sandjak

Salonika. In October, relying upon the support of Germany and knowing that Russia had not completely recovered from her losses in the Japanese War and that France was busily engaged in Morocco, Austria annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina. The annexation was a grave breach of international law. It was contrary to the terms of the Treaty of Berlin (1878), and to the decision that the Powers had made in 1871 that no single Power had the right to break a treaty without the consent of the other signatories. Strong protests were made by Sir Edward Grey and Isvolski, the Russian Minister, who demanded that the question should be referred to a Conference of the Powers. In February it seemed as if war between Russia, probably assisted by Serbia and Bulgaria, and Austria was imminent. But William II, who loved grandiloquent phrases, declared that Germany would fight on behalf of Austria like 'a knight in shining armour'. The Powers gave way and Austria kept Bosnia and Herzegovina. The *Triple Entente* had received a severe blow. The union between Austria and Germany had been greatly strengthened and Germany was committed to the defence of Austria's interests in the Balkans. But Italy was so incensed that she

contemplated withdrawing from the Triple Alliance ; Russia, which had recently made friendly overtures to Austria and Serbia, was bitterly affronted and, through fear of Germany and Austria was brought into closer relations with France and Great Britain. The annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina weakened the Triple Alliance and strengthened the *Triple Entente*. Another step had been taken towards the Great War.

About the same time the Macedonian question, in which Great Britain had taken an active and friendly interest, again **Macedonia, 1908-9** became prominent. Persecution had broken out afresh and Grey who, although a Liberal, continued the policy of Lansdowne attempted to get the Powers to take up the matter. He was not successful and an appeal to the Concert of Europe to intervene proved unsuccessful. But in 1909 the Young Turks had secured power in Turkey and, as they were supposed to be Liberals, Grey gladly left the settlement of Macedonia in their hands. But Marshall von Bieberstein won over the Young Turks to the side of Germany by flattery and bribery. They failed to make a good use of the power they had secured, and so disgusted the British ambassador that he described them somewhat forcibly as 'whippersnappers whom I would not care to touch with the end of a barge pole'. The unfortunate Macedonians soon found that the rule of the Young Turks was as cruel as that of Abdul Hamid and Macedonia continued to suffer.

On May 6th, 1910, King Edward VII died. The Kaiser, who detested his uncle, came over specially to attend the funeral. He had a ready command of tears and edified the crowds of onlookers by weeping copiously as the funeral procession passed through the streets of London. He seized the occasion to protest his friendship towards Great Britain, which he had recently accused of encircling Germany. Even if the sentiments the Kaiser uttered were genuine the policy of the Navy League, the articles that appeared in the German Press and the attitude of German merchants showed that Germany was still hostile to Great Britain.

In April 1911 a serious rebellion broke out in Morocco and the Sultan appealed for help to France. French troops were therefore sent to Fez, the capital, which was threatened by the rebels. The Germans thought that France would use the opportunity to divide Morocco between herself and Spain to the prejudice of German interests. They might reasonably have asked, as they did in 1905, for a European Conference, but, in spite of the Kaiser's protest, a German gunboat, the *Panther*, was sent to Agadir, a port on the Atlantic, nominally to protect the Germans who had settled in Morocco. Popular feeling in Germany strongly approved of this action, but Great Britain thought that it was the prelude to the establishment of German influence in the South of Morocco, and strongly resented the possibility that Agadir might become a German port. Germany took no notice of a strong protest Sir Edward Grey sent to Berlin and demanded the cession of most of the French Congo as compensation for the extension of French authority in Morocco. Feeling ran so high that there was a grave danger of war. On July 21st Mr. Lloyd George said at the Mansion House that Great Britain was determined to stand firm and that 'if a situation were to be forced upon us in which peace could only be preserved by the surrender of the great and beneficent position Britain had won by centuries of heroism and of achievements . . . then I say emphatically that peace at that price would be a humiliation intolerable for a great country like ours to endure'. Mr. Lloyd George's strong words proved effective. Germany, which was hampered by a financial crisis in Berlin and the war that had broken out between her ally Italy and her friend Turkey, adopted a more moderate attitude. Germany recognized the predominance of France in Morocco and France agreed to give Germany 'an open door' for trade in the country; a portion of the French Congo was added to the German Cameroons. 'The Panther's spring' had failed and the failure caused bitter disappointment in Berlin where it was regarded as a national humiliation. The Kaiser was blamed for giving in, and the Berlin *Post* called him 'this miserable coward'. Great resentment was aroused against Great Britain to whose representative,

Sir Arthur Nicolson,<sup>1</sup> the success of France was largely due.

The crisis at Agadir had a very serious effect upon European policy. It led Admiral von Tirpitz to introduce into the Reichstag a Supplementary Naval Law which would give Germany forty-one battleships and sixty cruisers by 1920, and Great Britain regarded the further increase of the German Navy with grave concern. Great Britain still held that while the *Entente Cordiale* bound her to give France diplomatic support it did not require her to give military help. But the Moroccan crisis had brought Great Britain into closer connexion with France ; it led France to believe that she could rely upon the military support of Great Britain which had been strengthened by the reform of the army which Haldane had carried out in 1911. The *Triple Entente* proved unsuccessful in 1908, the Dual Alliance in 1911. Neither group would put up with any further humiliation and the next serious difference that arose between the two would probably lead to a European war.

By this time efforts which Russia had made to extend her authority in Persia and to secure the right of sending Russian warships through the Dardanelles had greatly annoyed Sir Edward Grey. The support which Italy had given to France at Agadir showed that she was not a whole-hearted member of the Triple Alliance. Austria was the only ally on whom Germany could depend. Bethmann-Hollweg saw the need, in these circumstances, of securing the friendship of Great Britain. Haldane, who was on very good terms with the Kaiser, visited Berlin in 1912 in the hope that private interviews might pave the way for the understanding which all men of goodwill, both in England and Germany, earnestly desired. The German Navy was the crux of the problem. Mr. Lloyd George made it clear that an immediate halt in the increase of the German Navy was an essential condition of success, and proposed a 'naval holiday' for Great Britain and Germany. Tirpitz insisted that the ships contemplated in his recent Navy Bill must be regarded as part of the existing navy. Great Britain, in spite

<sup>1</sup> Lord Carnock.

of strong pressure from Berlin, refused to give a guarantee of absolute neutrality if Germany went to war with another European Power, but asserted that none of the agreements she had made were directed against Germany. The negotiations broke down on these points and Parliament answered the Reichstag by arranging for an increase in Naval Estimates which in 1920 would give Great Britain forty-one battleships. The refusal of the Germans to accept Mr. Lloyd George's suggestion of a 'naval holiday' was a grave mistake.

The failure of these negotiations was followed by actions which showed that Great Britain distrusted Germany and felt compelled to take steps which were obviously directed against her. In September 1912 an agreement with France led to the transfer of part of our fleet from Malta to the North Sea, and to the increase of the French Mediterranean Fleet. France was to hold the Mediterranean against any attack Austria might make, while Great Britain became responsible for the defence of the North Sea and the Channel in case war broke out between Germany and France. This arrangement practically committed Great Britain to defend the northern and western coast of France if necessity arose. The British supremacy on the North Sea was strengthened by the construction of a strong naval base at Rosyth on the Firth of Forth. In the following year representatives from the British War Office surveyed the roads and railways of Belgium.

In October 1912 Serbia, Bulgaria, Montenegro and Greece went to war with Turkey owing to her persistent refusal to fulfil the promises of reform she had made in the *The Balkan Wars, 1912-13* Treaty of Berlin. On October 8th the King of Montenegro fired with his own hands the first shot against the Turks. The war broke out so suddenly that the Powers could not prevent hostilities, but Sir Edward Grey was most anxious to stop it, partly because he feared that the defeat of Turkey would exasperate the Mohammedans of India, partly because he wished Turkey to retain Constantinople. Turkey was defeated but, largely owing to Grey's efforts, five ambassadors of the Powers met in London in December 1912 under the presidency of Grey who used the exceptional influence he had acquired to secure peace through the Concert of Europe.

On May 30th, 1913, he induced the belligerents to accept the Treaty of London which compelled Turkey to make concessions of territory to the Balkan States. All Turkey west of a line to be drawn from Enos, on the Aegean, to Midia, on the Black Sea, was to be given to the Balkan States and the territory was to be apportioned by the Great Powers. The Powers compelled Serbia to evacuate Albania. Through the influence of Great Britain the Concert of Europe had again apparently given peace to Europe. But the Young Turks, led by Enver Bey, refused to accept the Treaty of London which involved the surrender of Adrianople ; the victors, and especially Serbia and Bulgaria, quarrelled about the spoil. The Balkan War of Partition in which Bulgaria was opposed to her former allies who were assisted by Turkey, broke out in 1913. Differences of interest between Russia and Austria gravely hampered the work of the Powers. They succeeded in averting war between Russia and Austria ; they forced Greece and Turkey to make peace by the Convention of Athens, 1913 ; but failed to induce Roumania and Serbia to accept their decisions. Any attempt to apply compulsion to these states would probably have led to a war between the Central Powers and Russia, who would certainly be supported by France and possibly by Great Britain.

Germany profited greatly by her association with Turkey. Her trade with that country increased tenfold between 1889 and 1912. In November 1913 she sent General Liman von Sandars to reorganize the Turkish army and to command an Army Corps. Russia strongly protested against this extension of German influence in the Balkans. Sir Edward Grey supported Russia and although von Sandars remained at Constantinople he did not act as a Corps Commander.

By the end of 1913 Great Britain had secured the leading position in Europe. The defeat of Turkey, the friend of <sup>Strong posi-</sup> Germany, in the War of the Balkan League in <sup>tion of</sup> <sup>1912</sup> ~~Great Britain~~, 1912 ; the weakening of Austria owing to the rise <sup>1913-14</sup> of Serbia and the extension of the Pan-Slav movement ; and the recovery of Russia after the Russo-Japanese War had impaired the influence of Germany. Grey had exercised supreme influence in recent developments on

the Continent and the British Foreign Office dictated the policy of Europe.

By the middle of 1914 Great Britain had apparently secured the friendship of the Powers. Her relations with Russia were again friendly. King George V and Queen Mary visited Paris in July ; they received a most hearty welcome and their visit strengthened the excellent feeling that now prevailed between Great Britain and France. The problem of the German Navy still caused Grey many anxious moments, but the happy solution of other problems had led to a marked improvement in the relations between Great Britain and Germany. In May 1913 Grey explicitly stated that he had no objection to the increase of German influence in Central Africa ; difficulties that had arisen as to Portuguese territory in East Africa were amicably settled ; and the cordial reception given soon after to King George V in Berlin showed that Grey's conciliatory attitude was greatly appreciated in Germany. The difficulties that had arisen about the Baghdad railway were amicably settled. Great Britain assented to the extension of the railway beyond Basra, and in June 1914 made an agreement with Germany which recognized that Mesopotamia came within the German sphere of influence and provided that two British subjects should be added to the directorate of the railway.

Sir William Edward Goschen, the British Ambassador at Berlin, declared that the relations between Great Britain and Germany had now become 'more friendly and cordial than they had been for years'. Lichnowsky, the German ambassador in London was sincerely anxious to promote good relations between this country and his own, and the German Foreign Office seemed anxious to secure the friendship of Great Britain. But there was a strong undercurrent of hostility. The German Press, which was directly controlled by the German government, continued to make virulent attacks on British policy ; some English newspapers could find nothing good in Germany. The agreement about the Baghdad Railway never received official confirmation. On August 3rd, barely seven weeks after it was concluded, Great Britain declared war on Germany.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE OUTBREAK OF THE GREAT WAR

THE good effects which might have resulted from the improved relations which had been established between the British and German Foreign Offices were frustrated by the political instability of the Balkans. Russia had never forgiven Austria for seizing Bosnia and <sup>The Balkans, 1914</sup> Herzegovina <sup>1</sup> in spite of the Mürzsteg Punctuation of 1903 by which she and Russia had undertaken to maintain the *status quo* in the Balkans. Austria still viewed with alarm the Pan-Slav movement which threatened to weaken her heterogeneous empire, and regarded with special animosity Serbia the leading supporter of the Pan-Slav movement in the Balkans. The Treaty of Bucharest, 1913, which concluded the Balkan War of Partition, had given Central Macedonia to Serbia and made her an effective barrier to the *Drang nach Osten* which had become an important feature of Austrian policy.

The assassination of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, who was shot by a young Bosnian at Serajevo, furnished Austria with an excuse for the inevitable war with Serbia. Germany left Austria a free hand and promised unconditional support. On July 28th, 1914, war broke out between Austria and Serbia. The aggressive policy of Austria, relying upon the co-operation of Germany, was the immediate cause of war.

Recent wars in the Near East had been confined to the <sup>Ultimate causes of the Great War</sup> Balkans. The rivalry between the *Triple Entente* and the two leading members of the Triple Alliance had been embittered by the crises of Algeciras and Agadir. But for this rivalry the conflict between

<sup>1</sup> p. 135.

Austria and Serbia might have been confined to the Balkans. The division between the great Powers turned the Austro-Serbian war into the Great War in which all the leading nations of Europe took part. Russia, as Sazonoff said, 'could not allow Serbia to be crushed'. The intervention of Russia involved France in the war, and her 'honour and interest' compelled Great Britain to fight for the independence of Belgium. The ultimate cause of the Great War is to be found in the general policy of Europe which since the Franco-German War had made the Continent an armed camp. In that policy the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine and the development of the German Navy were factors that especially affected France and Great Britain.

Recent military and naval arrangements had shown that probably the peace of Europe would not long continue. The redistribution of the British fleet<sup>1</sup> was a sign of the times. In 1913 Germany increased her standing army by 63,000 men; Russia increased hers by 130,000 and brought her winter peace strength up to 1,845,000; French conscripts were required to put in three years' military service instead of two.

General conditions were such that a wide extension of the war seemed highly probable and the strongest efforts were made by all the Powers to avert war between Serbia and Austria, and to terminate it after it had begun. In these efforts Sir Edward Grey took a conspicuous part although, until the invasion of Belgium, he denied that Britain was definitely committed by any agreements to intervene in a European war.

On July 23rd Austria sent to Serbia a peremptory note which had been 'unofficially' communicated to Germany **Austria and Serbia** before it was despatched. Austria demanded that the Pan-Slav movement should be suppressed in Serbia, and that the Austro-Hungarian government should take part in the trial of Serbians who were suspected of complicity in the murder of the Archduke. An answer to the note was required within forty-eight hours. This very short time limit showed that Austria was determined to fight.

<sup>1</sup> p. 139.

Great Britain stated explicitly that she had no interest in Serbia which would warrant military intervention, but joined with Russia and France in urging Serbia to adopt a conciliatory attitude and pressing Austria to allow more time for a reply to her note.

Serbia made a most conciliatory reply to the Austrian note, but refused to allow Austro-Hungary to take any part in the impending criminal trial. She offered to refer this point to the Hague Tribunal or to the Great Powers, but Austria refused this most reasonable offer.

On July 26th the British fleet, which had just completed the summer manœuvres, was kept in commission and not demobilized in accordance with the usual custom. Three days later it was sent secretly to the North Sea and other stations.

Sir Edward Grey now proposed that the Serbian question should be referred to a Conference of the Powers, but both Germany and Austria refused to agree.

On July 28th Austria declared war on Serbia and massed troops on her Eastern frontier as a precaution against a Russian attack. Grey now proposed to the German ambassador, Lichnowsky, that hostilities between Austria and Serbia should cease but that Austria should keep Belgrade as a pledge that her demands would receive full consideration. Austria returned no answer to this proposal. On July 29th it was clear that Germany was contemplating a war with France, for Bethmann-Hollweg, the German Chancellor, inquired if Great Britain would remain neutral provided Germany promised to make no conquests in France while reserving the right to secure her colonies, and undertook to restore the integrity of Belgium after the war if circumstances should make it necessary for Germany to invade that country. Grey flatly refused to give any such assurance which he said would be a disgrace to Great Britain. But on the same day Grey explicitly told Cambon, the French ambassador, that Great Britain was under no obligation to support France in a war against Germany. On July 30th Goschen, the British ambassador at Berlin, assured Bethmann-Hollweg that, if Germany would help to maintain peace, neither Great Britain,

France nor Russia would adopt an 'aggressive or hostile policy' against her; but the assurance failed to achieve its purpose.

Meanwhile France was urging Grey to make a formal declaration that if war broke out Great Britain would intervene if necessary; for it was felt that such a statement would make Germany pause before engaging in war with France. Sir Eyre Crowe, the British ambassador in Paris, now urged Grey definitely to promise to give to France the military support of which she had 'an honourable expectation'. But Grey took neither of these courses, for he was desperately anxious to keep Great Britain at peace and was reluctant to do anything which would compromise her neutrality.

In case of war both France and Germany would derive great advantage from the occupation of Belgium. But

**Belgium** Great Britain, France, Prussia, Austria and Russia had guaranteed the neutrality and independence of Belgium by the Treaty of London in 1839. This country had always insisted that no agreement made by the Powers should be varied except with the consent of all the contracting parties, and the independence of Belgium had long been a cardinal point of British Foreign Policy. On July 31st Grey asked both France and Germany if they would respect the neutrality of Belgium. France immediately gave the desired assurance; Germany evaded the question, but asked if Great Britain would remain neutral if Germany respected the neutrality of Belgium. Grey refused to give any such promise but again asserted that Britain was not committed to war.

Russia completed her mobilization on the last day of July, and Germany therefore declared war on her on August 1st. The action of Russia made war inevitable, but the real cause of the Great War was the offensive ultimatum Austria had sent to Serbia on July 23rd.<sup>1</sup> It is highly probable that Germany might have prevented war if she had checked the aggressive action of Austria. Her failure to do this must be included among the direct causes of the war.

<sup>1</sup> p. 143.

On August 2nd Grey promised Cambon that, subject to the support of Parliament, the British fleet would protect the ~~Britain com-~~ French coast and French shipping if the German ~~mitted to war~~ fleet attacked them. As a conflict between France and Germany was now inevitable Great Britain was committed to war. Practically Britain had incurred this obligation in 1912 when the rearrangement of the stations of the British and French fleets made Great Britain responsible for the North Sea and France for the Mediterranean.

On August 2nd the German ambassador at Brussels stated positively that Germany had no intention of invading ~~Great Britain~~ Belgium, but on the same day an ultimatum was sent ~~declares War~~ to Belgium demanding a free passage for German troops. On August 3rd Germany declared war on France and invaded Belgium in spite of the Treaty of 1839. Grey strongly protested against the action of Germany, and Goschen, the British ambassador at Berlin, told the German Chancellor that unless the German troops evacuated Belgium Great Britain would declare war on Germany. Bethmann-Hollweg, who sincerely desired peace with Great Britain, bitterly complained that 'Just for a word "neutrality," just for "a scrap of paper", Great Britain was going to make war on a kindred nation who desires nothing better than to be friends with her.' 'Unfortunately, sir,' answered Goschen, 'that scrap of paper contains our signature as well as yours.'

Up to this time the idea of British intervention had been strongly opposed by many Englishmen; the Labour party was unanimous in favour of peace and many, perhaps most, of the Liberals were equally decided. On Sunday, August 2nd, no one could foresee what course Great Britain would adopt. The invasion of Belgium convinced nearly every Briton that, as Sir Edward Grey said, our 'honour and interest' made it imperative that we should give armed support to Belgium. Lord Lansdowne and Mr. Bonar Law assured the Liberal government of the hearty co-operation of the Unionist party in any action that became necessary. The Labour party and many Liberals, although strongly opposed to war, came into line and at 11 p.m. on August 3rd, 1914, Great Britain declared war on Germany.

Britain had been forced into war in spite of the heroic efforts Grey had made to preserve peace. But Germany, **Grey's Policy** who might have checked Austria, refused to co-operate with Great Britain. Grey tried to revive the Concert of Europe as a means of averting war, but the Concert, which in recent years had six times prevented war, failed Europe in the greatest crisis in her history. He had persistently asserted that Great Britain was not definitely committed to war in alliance with any Power in spite of the moral obligation she had incurred towards France, and hoped that her neutral position would lend weight to any representations Great Britain might make. On learning that Germany had declared war on Russia he immediately sent seventeen telegrams to the Chancelleries of Europe in a vain attempt to stave off the inevitable. But all his efforts failed.

Some critics consider that Grey's policy was too indefinite. They maintain that if he had asserted that Great Britain would intervene on behalf of France on July 31st, when Cambon begged for such an assurance, Germany would never have declared war on France. But neither the Cabinet nor the House of Commons would have endorsed the statement on that day, and Foreign Policy is ultimately dependent on the approval of Parliament. Others, with greater probability, maintain that when the gravity of the crisis was fully realized, Grey might have averted war if he had explicitly warned Germany that an invasion of Belgium would compel Great Britain immediately to declare war on Germany. But History is concerned not with might-have-beens, but with hard facts.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE DIPLOMACY OF THE GREAT WAR

THE struggle in which the *Triple Entente* found itself engaged on August 3rd, 1914, was so severe that the Allies were compelled to secure all the help they could get, and in the first year of the war British diplomacy was largely engaged in an attempt to win over countries which had not formally joined one side or the other. The alliance of Roumania, Turkey, Greece and Italy was essential for the maintenance of easy communication with Russia, which was largely dependent upon her Western allies for the munitions of war that her vast, but badly equipped, armies so badly needed. If Bulgaria could be won over to the cause of the *Entente* Germany and Austria would be cut off from Turkey, and the latter would be compelled to come into line.

Owing to the conciliatory policy the Kaiser had pursued, to the skilful intrigues of the German ambassadors to the Porte, Turkey Marshall von Bieberstein and his successor Baron Wangenheim, and to the strong sympathy of Enver Bey for Germany, German influence had become supreme at Constantinople. Turkey was reluctant to make common cause with Russia, her long-standing enemy of whom Great Britain was an ally; she wished to regain Egypt, in which British influence was strong, and Cyprus which had been given to Great Britain by the Treaty of Berlin, 1878.<sup>1</sup> On August 2nd, 1914, Turkey concluded a secret treaty with Germany, but for some time she deluded Great Britain with an assurance of neutrality because she felt that she was not strong enough to hold the Straits, or even to control the turbulent populace of Constantinople. Two German cruisers,

<sup>1</sup> p. 79.

the *Goeben* and *Breslau*, eluded the Allied Fleets and reached Turkish waters. Technically the Straits were closed to them as they were belligerent vessels but, at the suggestion of Wangenheim, they were made over to Turkey by a fictitious sale and reached Constantinople flying the Turkish flag. Their presence relieved the Sultan of the danger of a rising of the noisy, but uninfluential, section of the population which was inclined to support the *Entente*. The offer of the Allies to guarantee the territorial integrity of Turkey on condition of her neutrality was declined, and at the end of October the ambassadors of the Allies left Constantinople. Great Britain now proclaimed a protectorate over Egypt and agreed that Russia should receive Constantinople after the war. Thus the traditional British policy towards Turkey, on which Palmerston and Disraeli had insisted, was completely reversed.

In August 1914 Venizelos offered to Great Britain the support of the Greek army and navy, but the offer was declined.

**Greece** In refusing the offer the British Government made a grave mistake, for the Greeks would have been only too glad again to make war on Turkey, and the Turks were destined to inflict grave injury on the cause of the Allies.

Italy declared her neutrality on August 1st, 1914. She had never been an enthusiastic member of the Triple Alliance.

**Italy** She had sided with Great Britain and France against Germany at Algeciras. Her recent war with Turkey had provoked strong protests from Germany who supplied the Turks with weapons to fight her ally, and from Austria who resented the extension of Italian influence in the Adriatic. Italy had declared that, although a member of the Alliance, she would never fight against Great Britain, whose sympathy in her struggle for freedom and unification was still remembered with sincere gratitude. Austria was the old enemy of Italy and the call of the 'unredeemed' lands was strong. But there was an influential party, particularly among the nobles, who favoured Germany; German financiers had gained considerable influence owing to the help they had given to the commercial development of the country, and Giolitti, the Premier, was a strong supporter of Germany. The refusal of Austria to give Trieste and the Trentino to Italy

as the price of neutrality, and the strong protests of the Italian people against a war in which Italy would fight Great Britain turned the scale ; on April 26th, 1915, Italy promised to join the Allies within one month. The terms she exacted proved the truth of Salandra's statement that ' sacred egoism ' must be the guiding principle of Italian policy. By the Treaty of London, 1915, the Allies agreed that after the war Italy should receive Southern Tyrol, Istria (including Trieste), Northern Dalmatia, Valona and a protectorate over Albania, and the Dodecanese.<sup>1</sup> If the Allies occupied Turkish territory, or extended their colonial empire in Africa, Italy was to receive suitable compensation. This treaty is open to serious criticism. It violated the principle of nationality, for the population of Northern Dalmatia was mainly Slav, the Tyrolese were Austrians and the inhabitants of the Dodecanese were Greek. The Serbians, Austrians and Greeks resented the transfer of their kindred to a foreign state, and the arrangement seemed fatal to the union of the Jugoslavs<sup>2</sup> at which the Slav leaders were aiming. But the Allies were sorely weakened by the failure of the expedition to the Dardanelles and by the success of Mackensen in driving the Russians out of Galicia, and they were compelled to purchase the support of Italy on her own terms. On May 22nd, 1915, Italy declared war on Austria.

King Charles of Roumania was a Hohenzollern and wished to support Germany and Austria, but the strong Democratic party led by Také Jonescu favoured the Allies.

**Roumania** The issue of the war was doubtful and Roumania adopted a policy of ' watchful neutrality '. But the example of Italy had a strong effect on Roumania, and Austria refused to make the concessions necessary to liberate a large number of Roumanians from her authority. In the summer of 1916 the prospects of the Allies seemed good. A heavy blow was struck against the centre and south of the Austrian line by the Russians under Brussilov ; the German attack on Verdun was proving unsuccessful, and the First Battle of the Somme appeared likely to end in a great victory for the Allies. On

<sup>1</sup> Twelve islands in the Aegean Sea.

<sup>2</sup> i.e. Southern Slavs as distinct from those of Austria.

August 27th, 1916, Roumania declared war on Austria ; and a few days later Germany and Bulgaria declared war on Roumania. The Allies promised that at the end of the war Roumania should receive the Bukovina, Transylvania and the Banat of Temesvar. The promise of Temesvar, which adjoined Serbia, seemed likely to weaken the united kingdom which the Jugoslavs hoped to establish, and the support of Roumania, as of Italy, was secured at the cost of strong resentment on the part of the Jugoslavs.

The direct line of communication from Germany and Austria to Constantinople lay through Bulgaria ; Bulgaria could materially help the Allies by attacking **Bulgaria** Turkey from the North, and thus helping the Allies to get control of the Straits and to maintain communication with Russia. But King Ferdinand was angry because by the Treaty of Bucharest, 1913, Bulgaria had been deprived of any share in Macedonia, which had been divided between Serbia, Montenegro and Greece. Although Great Britain had approved of the Treaty of Bucharest she tried to induce Serbia and Greece to restore Macedonia to Bulgaria, but they absolutely refused. Ferdinand had been on good terms with Russia, but the fear that Russia would get Constantinople if the Allies won the war seriously alarmed him, and the fact that Serbia was the common enemy of Bulgaria and Austria led him to seek the friendship of Austria. As a member of the princely House of Coburg he was naturally inclined to support Germany which, he felt certain, was sure to win the war. But there was a strong party in Bulgaria which favoured the cause of the *Triple Entente* and was particularly well disposed towards Great Britain. The leaders of the opposition in the Sobranje warned King Ferdinand that he might lose his throne if he supported the Central Powers. A large peasant party led by M. Stambolisky was anxious for an alliance with the *Entente*, and their leader strongly urged that a Russian army should be landed at Varna and Burgas to co-operate with the peasants in forcing King Ferdinand to declare war against the Central Powers. In spite of the precedent Germany had made by invading Belgium, Sir Edward Grey refused to accept the suggestion that Great Britain should countenance the in-

vasion of a country with which she was at peace. Mackensen's success in Galicia proved the deciding factor, and on July 17th, 1915, Bulgaria joined Germany, Austria and Turkey.

The attempt to secure the help of the Arabs led to serious complications. Great Britain had recognized the French claim to predominant interest in Syria, but in Syria 1915, without informing France, she encouraged Hussein to form an Arab Kingdom which was to include Syria. The French, finding that the Arabs resented their authority, strengthened their position by forming on May 16th, 1916, a treaty with Great Britain and Russia which divided up Asia Minor and assigned Syria to France, Mesopotamia to Great Britain and Armenia to Russia. The problem of the final settlement of Syria was destined to add to the difficulties of the Peace Conference.

In the early part of 1917 Great Britain was compelled to seek the help of the Japanese Navy for the protection of her Japan commerce in the Far East. In February of that year a treaty was made which provided that Japan was to receive all German islands in the Pacific lying north of the Equator, Kiaochou and Shantung. Thus Japan was to receive territory belonging to China which was one of our allies.

The question of the freedom of the seas led to serious difficulties between Great Britain and the United States. In the reign of Henry VIII Parliament declared that ' it is of the Seas upon the navy, under God, that our safety doth depend ', and the command of the seas had always been a fixed tradition of British policy. The British rightly claimed that their navy had played a great part in frustrating the attempts of Louis XIV and Napoleon to secure the mastery of Europe, but their claim to the right to search neutral vessels had led to war with the United States in 1812-13. The Treaty of Ghent which concluded the war had given no formal definition of the rights of a belligerent with regard to neutral vessels, but the Treaty of Paris, 1856, provided that in time of war neutral ships should make neutral cargoes except in case of contraband of war, and that blockades to be respected must be effective. On February 4th, 1915, the Germans proclaimed a submarine

blockade of Great Britain and Great Britain in reply declared a counter-blockade of German ports.

Shortly after the declaration of war the Allied Powers asserted that goods carried on neutral vessels were divided into three categories : contraband goods included all munitions of war ; food and clothing which might be used by the enemy were conditional contraband ; most commodities, including cotton and all seeds, were not contraband. But in time the war became a siege of Germany and any goods delivered for the enemy became contraband. The list of contraband goods was greatly extended by Orders-in-Council, the distinction between conditional and absolute contraband was abolished, and in March 1916 one hundred and sixty-nine articles were declared contraband of war and therefore liable to seizure if carried by neutral vessels.

The British policy aroused great indignation in the United States. American trade had benefited greatly by the war and the Americans objected to any attempt to restrict it. They refused a request from Germany to prohibit the export of munitions of war, of which the greatest part was destined for England. They resented the British custom of escorting to a British port neutral vessels the papers of which had proved to the naval officers who boarded them that they were bound to a neutral port and carried no contraband of war. They justly complained that owing to the rapid extension of the list of contraband by Orders-in-Council, goods which were not contraband when they left an American port often became contraband when they reached European waters ; they made a very strong protest when, early in the war, bunker coal was declared contraband.

The United States took a higher standpoint when they championed the cause of all neutral countries. They defended the interests of the smaller neutral states as well as their own, and were particularly requested by Holland to undertake the task of maintaining the freedom of the seas for all nations. They refused to admit that a British Order-in-Council must be accepted as the international law of the seas. They complained that Great Britain was denying to non-belligerents the trading rights on which she had insisted when she was a

neutral in the Russo-Japanese War. Feeling ran so high in the United States that Congress authorized the construction of sixteen battleships and cruisers to protect neutral and American shipping against the belligerents of both sides.

The tension between the two countries was relieved by the ruthlessness of the Germans which caused the United States to join the Allies. Strong indignation had been aroused in America by the brutality the Germans had shown in Belgium. On May 7th, 1915, the Cunard passenger ship the *Lusitania* was torpedoed off the Old Head of Kinsale, and a number of American citizens were included among the 1,134 people who were drowned. The Germans stated that the *Lusitania* was carrying munitions, but a judicial inquiry which was held at New York proved that this statement was untrue. The loss of American lives in such tragic circumstances caused a thrill of horror in the United States. On January 31st, 1917, the Germans declared their intention of sinking at sight any vessels, of whatever nationality, which they found in British or French waters. This policy brought the United States into the Great War. President Wilson asserted that 'vessels of every kind, whatever their flag, their cargo or their destination have been ruthlessly sent to the bottom, without warning, and without thought of help or mercy for those on board'. On April 6th, 1917, the United States declared war on Germany.

Europe was oppressed by the horrors of war ; the longing for peace grew stronger and stronger and from time to time efforts were made to end hostilities.

The first overtures came from Germany. On December 12th, 1916, the Germans asserted their desire to make peace.

**Overtures for Peace, Dec. 1916** But they did not specify the terms which they would be willing to accept ; they were holding Belgium, Serbia and Roumania, and the Allies refused to consider the question of a peace on general terms at a time when the Germans were in so favourable a position. In the same month President Wilson urged that the war should be ended by a 'Peace without Victory'. Again the Germans refused to suggest definite terms, but the Allies, in spite of the serious reverses they had recently suffered, declared that the liberation of the Slavs and Roumanians from

the power of Germany and Austria, the restoration of Belgium and the expulsion of the Turks from Europe were essential conditions of peace.

By the beginning of 1917 Austria was worn out. Secret negotiations were carried out with the Allies by Prince Sixte <sup>Austria nego.</sup> Bourbon, the brother-in-law of the Emperor <sup>tates, 1917</sup> Charles, who desired to make peace with the Allies and was willing to agree to the evacuation and restoration of Belgium and Serbia and the cession of Alsace-Lorraine to France. Mr. Lloyd George was in favour of accepting the offer, but Austria was unwilling to cede to Italy the South of the Tyrol, and owing to the opposition of Italy no further steps were taken to secure the withdrawal of Austria from the war.

By the end of 1917 Great Britain was utterly weary of the war. The Germans won the Third Battle of Ypres (July 31st <sup>Lord Lans-</sup> to November 6th) and the Battle of Cambrai <sup>downe's</sup> (November 20th to December 7th), and our campaign in Flanders had failed. The Italians had been utterly routed at Caporetto on October 24th. The government of Russia had fallen into the hands of the Bolsheviks who had made peace with Germany by the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, March 14th, which brought Poland and Lithuania under German protection. It seemed doubtful whether the Allies could win the war and there was an earnest desire for an honourable peace. On November 22nd, 1917, Lord Lansdowne in a letter to the *Daily Telegraph* suggested that negotiations might be opened with Germany if the Allies gave assurances that her position as a great political power should be maintained, and agreed to settle international questions, including that of the freedom of the seas, by peaceful methods. The letter did more harm than good. It did not emphasize the fact that the Allies were fighting for freedom, and that freedom was impossible until militarism had been destroyed.

In the beginning of 1918 two important announcements were made. On January 6th Mr. Lloyd George issued an <sup>British terms,</sup> official statement as to the terms on which Great <sup>Jan. 1918</sup> Britain would make peace. He disclaimed any desire to destroy the Central Powers, although he advocated

autonomy for the separate divisions of the Austrian Empire. The Russian Revolution had relieved the Allies of their undertaking<sup>1</sup> to give Constantinople to Russia, and Mr. Lloyd George stated that the Allies had now no desire to take Constantinople from the Sultan. But he also asserted that the national rights of Belgium, Italy, Roumania, Poland, Arabia, Mesopotamia, and Palestine must be acknowledged ; that Alsace-Lorraine must be restored to France ; that Germany must make reparation for injuries done to Allied territory ; that an international tribunal must be established to check war, and that the decision as to the future of the German colonies must be referred to a Conference of the Powers. This plain statement showed that, in spite of the ruthless submarine attack that Germany maintained, Great Britain was determined to stop the aggression of Germany, although her attitude towards Austro-Hungary and Turkey had been considerably modified since December 1916.

Two days later, on January 8th, President Wilson laid down the 'Fourteen Points' which he considered essential for the establishment of lasting peace. These included  
**The Fourteen Points, Jan. 1918** the evacuation and restoration of all territories conquered by Germany ; the cession of Alsace-Lorraine to France ; the settlement on the lines of nationality of the Italian boundary, Austro-Hungary, the Balkans and Poland. A protest was made against secret diplomacy ; the right of all nations to freedom of the seas was asserted. The germ of the League of Nations appeared in the demand for 'a general association of nations . . . for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small States alike'. The 'Fourteen Points' produced no immediate effect ; the German offensive of 1918 was the reply the Central Powers gave to the President's terms.

The war was fought to the bitter end. The German army suffered 2,500,000 casualties between March and November 1918 ; the Allies pressed hard on their rapidly retreating foes, whose left flank had been turned by the Americans and their right by the Belgians.

<sup>1</sup> p. 149.

The German army had to choose between annihilation and surrender. The *morale* of the civilian population was broken ; Socialist risings took place all over the country, particularly in Cologne and the industrial towns of Westphalia. On November 9th, the Red Flag was hoisted on the Royal Palace at Berlin and the next day the Kaiser fled to Holland. A mutiny broke out in the fleet at Kiel on November 4th and soon spread through the Baltic ports. On November 6th the Germans sent a wireless message asking for permission to send delegates to treat with Marshal Foch, the Generalissimo of the Allied Forces. Marshal Foch agreed to meet them. Firing was stopped on the route the delegates were instructed to take, and they had an interview with Marshal Foch in a railway carriage near Hirson. ‘Gentlemen,’ said the Marshal, ‘what do you want ?’ The Germans said they had come to consider suggestions for an armistice. Foch bluntly stated that the Allies did not want one and proposed to continue fighting. The Germans then begged for an armistice and were given three days to accept the terms of the Allies.

The Armistice was signed at 5 a.m. on November 11th and hostilities ceased six hours later. By the Armistice, which was to last for thirty-six days, the Germans were required immediately to evacuate all occupied territory, to surrender 5,000 guns, 25,000 machine-guns, 2,000 aeroplanes, all submarines and seventy-four warships. The Allies were to occupy the left bank of the Rhine, and to form bridgeheads with a radius of nineteen miles on the right bank at Cologne, Mayence and Coblenz. These terms made it impossible for the Germans to offer any further resistance and compelled them to agree to any conditions of peace that the Allies chose to impose.

**The Armis-  
tice, Nov.  
11th, 1918**

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE PEACE TREATY OF VERSAILLES, 1919

**T**HE task of making a just settlement was bound to be most difficult. Circumstances made it even more difficult than it need have been.

President Wilson, a man of sincere religious conviction, believed that he would have the support of the United States in his attempt to apply the Sermon on the Mount to European politics. He desired to replace the old secret diplomacy, which had led to the war, by open negotiation. He wished to make the world safe for democracy, to give full expression to national aspirations, to make justice the basis of the new world that he hoped to create. But the elections which had just been held in the States resulted in the return to Congress of a majority who disapproved of Wilsonism. The President found himself fighting for an 'American' policy which a majority of his people had rejected. And soon the President was compelled to assent to arrangements which violated the principle of nationality and made new territorial readjustments for reasons of strategy, or commerce, even of revenge. He failed to realize that differences of historical tradition and geographical situation made the whole outlook of Americans different from that of Europeans. He was convinced that the cause he advocated was that of God and the People, and this conviction made him impatient of delay and intolerant of criticism. He ought never to have come to Paris and his failure is one of the tragedies of history.

Popular clamour in Britain demanded strong measures. During the 'Khaki Election' of December 1918 the British

people hysterically clamoured for stern punishment for the Germans. They loudly applauded Mr. Lloyd George when, **Popular Feeling** in an electioneering address at Bristol, he said 'we must search the pockets' of Germany and compel her to pay 'the whole cost of the war'. Mr. Barnes, a Cabinet Minister, declared 'I am for hanging the Kaiser'; it was the most popular speech he ever made. The new House of Commons consisted almost entirely of extremists, and when Mr. Lloyd George was thought to be treating Germany too leniently three hundred and sixty members sent him a telegram urging him to change his policy. Some newspapers inflamed the minds of their readers by printing a daily message of hate, and virulently attacked Mr. Lloyd George for what they called his weakness. The compulsion of popular opinion in France partly accounts for the excessive demands made by M. Clemenceau, and strong feeling in Italy forced the hands of Signor Orlando.

The Conference of Versailles did not start its work until January 18th, 1919. The task of settling the problems that **Early Difficulties** had arisen out of the war was urgent and the delay, which was due partly to the British elections and partly to the late arrival of President Wilson, was most unfortunate. When the Conference met it suffered from the lack of a programme based on a well-considered and definite policy. President Wilson refused to accept an excellent programme which the French presented. The delegates did not know whether they were to draw up a Final Treaty which was to be imposed on Germany, or whether they were simply to make a Preliminary Treaty which would be followed by a Final Settlement made with the co-operation of Germany. The Fourteen Points<sup>1</sup> of President Wilson had been increased by later additions to twenty-three. Of these additions the most important was the declaration that 'Peoples and provinces must not be bartered about from sovereignty to sovereignty as if they were chattels, or pawns in a game'. The President's suggestions undoubtedly had some influence on the work of the Conference but were not adopted as its general policy. The Allies in their hour of victory were not willing

<sup>1</sup> p. 156.

to accept terms which they might have accepted in January 1918. Great Britain refused to agree to the freedom of the seas, and insisted that military pensions should be added to the 'civilian damages' that Germany was to pay ; France and Italy demanded territorial readjustments which violated the principle of nationality. Mr. Harold Nicolson<sup>1</sup> asserts that 'of President Wilson's twenty-three conditions only four can, with any accuracy, be said to have been incorporated in the Treaties of Peace'. The determination of President Wilson made the League of Nations the chief consideration of the Conference in its early stages. At the end of March 1919 Mr. Lloyd George insisted that the main duty of the Conference was to make peace with Germany, and that this task must be tackled at once. The Conference responded to this strong lead and by unremitting efforts succeeded in completing the Peace Treaty by July.

The choice of Paris as the meeting-place of the Conference was unfortunate. The French were convinced that  
**Paris**                   Germany had caused the war, and bitterly represented the injury the invaders had inflicted on Northern France. Paris had been shelled during the war and was suffering from shell-shock. The general atmosphere was such as to make a just and final settlement impossible.

The task of the Conference was made more difficult by differences of interest between the Allies. France was determined to gain security for the future, and thought  
**Differences**           that she would attain her object only if Germany  
**between the**           Allies was crippled ; many Frenchmen demanded not only security but revenge. The Monroe Doctrine remained an article of faith in the United States and Americans generally were unwilling to make it subordinate to the idea of a League of Nations. The terms on which Italy had joined the Allies<sup>2</sup> had promised her control of the eastern coast of the Adriatic and caused strong resentment among the Jugoslavs, who felt that an outlet on that sea was imperative

<sup>1</sup> *Peacemaking, 1919*, Constable, p. 44.

<sup>2</sup> p. 152.

for their future prosperity. The Poles were at variance with the Czechoslovaks about territorial readjustments. Both the United States and Australia viewed with grave apprehension the possibility of the extension of Japanese influence in the Pacific, and China resented the undertaking the Allies had given that Japan should keep Kiaochou and Shantung after the war. Belgium had been embittered by her undeserved sufferings.

On January 18th, 1919, the Peace Conference met at Versailles, on the same day of the year and in the same room which had seen the proclamation of the German Empire in 1871. <sup>Opening of the Peace Conference</sup> Seventy delegates, representing twenty-seven countries, attended the Conference.

The British Empire was represented by fourteen delegates : France, Italy, Japan and the United States by five each. Many of the states had never before taken part in an important political conference : Poland again took her place among the nations of Europe : the presence of representatives from Czechoslovakia and Jugoslavia showed that the Czechs of Bohemia and the Slavs of Serbia had become the centre of national kingdoms which had been carved out of the Austrian Empire. The delegates of the Hedjaz, Syria and Hayti seemed strange members of a European Conference. One state, which had been invited, did not appear in time. The representatives of Korea, who had left their homes on February 5th, did not reach Paris until December, and found on their arrival that the Conference had finished its labours. On the suggestion of Mr. Lloyd George and President Wilson, Russia was invited to send representatives, but the invitation was declined.

M. Clemenceau was elected President of the Conference. The leading part in the proceedings was played by Great Britain, the United States, France, Italy and Japan which had taken the greatest share in the war, and these Powers formed a Council of Ten to which the general direction of the Conference was entrusted. But in March 1919 the 'Big Four', Mr. Lloyd George, President Wilson, M. Clemenceau and Signor Orlando, superseded the Council of Ten, and the Treaty of Versailles was largely due to their efforts. Fifty-

eight committees were appointed to consider and report on special problems such as the League of Nations and Reparations; the committees held 1,646 meetings in six months.

The Covenant of the League of Nations, the result of President Wilson's inspiration and the indefatigable efforts of General Smuts and Lord Robert Cecil, was accepted as an integral part of the Treaty of Versailles, and of the supplementary Peace Treaties. All independent nations and self-governing dominions were to be eligible for membership. The League was to be managed by a Council of Nine to which Great Britain, the United States, France, Italy and Japan supplied five permanent members, the remaining four being elected by other states in turn. The Assembly of the League, composed of representatives of all the members, met for the first time at Geneva on November 15th, 1920, when forty-one members were represented.

The Permanent Court of International Justice of the League was to sit at The Hague, but the attendance of members was to be voluntary. A permanent Secretariat was to be established at Geneva, the official 'seat of the League'.

The main object of the League is 'to promote international co-operation and to secure international peace and security by the acceptance of obligations not to resort to war'. All disputes must be submitted to the Court of Arbitration and no nation may start a war until three months after the Court has issued its award. The idea that government is a trust and must be exercised in the interests of the governed led to the issue of mandates, whereby conquered territory was to be held of the League by selected nations who were to be held responsible to the League for their success in promoting 'the material and moral well-being and the social progress of the inhabitants'. This important departure was originally suggested by General Smuts. The League deals also with questions of 'fair and humane conditions of labour', traffic in drugs and munitions: international hygiene and commerce.

Article XIX of the Covenant provides that 'The Assembly

may from time to time advise the reconsideration by members of the League of treaties which have become inapplicable, and the consideration of international conditions whose continuance might endanger the peace of the world'. Circumstances soon showed that some of the conditions of the Treaty of Versailles urgently needed reconsideration, and Article XIX by vesting the power of reviewing treaties in the League of Nations has made war no longer the chief means of territorial readjustment.

The League of Nations very soon rendered valuable services to Europe. The difficult questions that arose about Danzig and Fiume were settled when these cities were placed under the authority of the League. The institution of 'mandates' subject to the League solved the problem as to the disposal of the German colonies. Before long a dispute between Great Britain and Turkey as to the boundaries of Irak was settled by the intervention of the League after the statesmen of both nations had failed to come to an agreement. But the League did not end war. Within a few months after it was established Roumania went to war with Hungary; Poland fought Russia; the New Turkey that soon arose on the ruins of the old soon found itself engaged in a bitter struggle with Greece. The League was hampered by the lack of effective guarantees that its decrees would be put into operation. It had no force which could compel recalcitrant nations to accept its decisions, and subsequent years were to show that the hopes with which the League had been established were sometimes disappointed. But the success of the League is imperative for the welfare of the world, if only because it does supply an alternative for war which is bound to become more and more dreadful with the development of science.

In making a new disposition of territory the Conference endeavoured to establish states on the basis of nationality, **Nationality** to give to all people the right of self-determination, and to see that alien minorities were protected from oppression. By re-creating Poland, establishing Hungary as an independent state, maintaining the union of Germany, breaking up the anti-national Austrian Empire and recognizing the independence of Czechoslovakia and Jugoslavia the

Conference rendered great service to the cause of nationality.

But partly owing to distrust of Germany and partly to the conditions of treaties made with Allies during the war, the principle of nationality was sometimes violated, and territorial readjustments were made owing to reasons of strategy as in the Trentino, or of commerce as at Danzig and Fiume. Many Germans in Alsace-Lorraine and East Prussia came under the authority of France or Poland, many Greeks and Jugoslavs became subjects of Italy, many Hungarians of Czechoslovakia or Jugoslavia. But the plebiscites, conducted by the League of Nations, which gave Malmédy to Belgium, Northern Schleswig to Denmark, Lower Silesia and Southern Schleswig to Germany, and East Prussia to Poland were obvious attempts to give effect to the principle of self-determination according to which the inhabitants of the districts in question decided their own political destiny.

The urgent desire of France for security against Germany and for compensation for the material losses she had suffered ~~France and Security~~ in the war caused considerable difficulty. President Wilson was compelled to oppose 'Tiger' Clemenceau on important points and Mr. Lloyd George, contrary to the expectation which his recent election addresses had aroused, fought 'like a little Welsh terrier' for a more moderate policy towards Germany than France was willing to adopt. No question arose as to the restoration to France of Alsace and Lorraine. But France demanded as a further measure of security that the left bank of the Rhine, the population of which was mainly German, should be made into an independent and neutral state which would form an effective barrier against a German advance. 'The Rhine', said Marshal Foch, 'governs everything'. President Wilson and Mr. Lloyd George refused to agree to an arrangement which would separate so many Germans from their native land, but agreed that France should hold the coalfields of the Saar Valley for fifteen years, under the authority of the League of Nations, as compensation for the damage done to the coalfields of France during the war. On March 14th, 1919, they promised

that Great Britain and the United States would guarantee France against attack.

Further differences arose between France and Great Britain as to Poland. The French wished to make Poland strong enough to act as an effective check on Eastern Poland

Germany, Mr. Lloyd George objected to a scheme which would have put two hundred thousand Germans under Polish rule. Poland finally received Posen and West Prussia from Germany and Galicia from Austria, and thus recovered most of the territory she had lost by the partitions of the eighteenth century. Partly owing to the persistence of Mr. Lloyd George, who had opposed the cession of the whole of Silesia, Poland failed to get Danzig which is a German city. Danzig was made a free city under the League of Nations, and Poland enjoys equal rights with other nations in the city which, as the port of the Vistula, has played an important part in her commercial life. To give Poland easy access to Danzig she received the 'Polish Corridor', a strip of agricultural land with a considerable German population, lying between East and West Prussia and varying in width from twenty to seventy miles. The corridor cut off the Germans living in East Prussia from their fellow-countrymen.

The old 'ramshackle' Austrian Empire had been a mere mosaic of nationalities, held together by a personal tie to the

<sup>The Break-up of Austro-Hungary</sup> House of Hapsburg. It was now broken up into four parts. Austria became an inland state. The loss of the greater part of her territory and lack of access to the sea has led to grave economic crisis, and Vienna has been reduced to a state of famine. Hungary became a republic. Czechoslovakia, which owed its existence to the indefatigable efforts of Professor Masaryk, and Jugoslavia had been officially recognized by Great Britain in August 1918. A serious difficulty which had arisen between Jugoslavia and Italy was settled in 1920, when Italy surrendered the Dalmatian coast, and the recognition of Fiume as a free city under the League of Nations gave to Jugoslavia the use of a valuable Adriatic port.

Italy received the Trentino, the population of which

**Italy** was mainly Austrian, Trieste and Pola and thus the 'unredeemed' lands were redeemed. She received also the Dodecanese of which the inhabitants were entirely Greek.

**Greece** Greece profited by the dismemberment of Turkey and gained Macedonia, Thrace, and the port of Smyrna with its hinterland of Ionia. Greece thus secured the command of most of the Aegean coastline.

**War Guilt Clauses** The Supreme Council of the Versailles Conference affirmed 'that the immediate cause of the war was the decision deliberately taken by those responsible for German policy in Berlin, and their confederates in Vienna and Budapest, to impose a solution of a European question on the nations of Europe by threat of war, and if the other members of the Concert refused this dictation, by war itself immediately declared'. The Allies further declared that the war was 'imposed upon them by the aggression of Germany and her allies'. Germany was thus declared responsible for the outbreak of hostilities, and the severe terms imposed upon her may be regarded to some extent as punishment for the crime of causing the war.

**German Losses** The Treaty deprived Germany of eight million people and twenty-five thousand square miles of territory. Germany lost all her colonies, Alsace-Lorraine, West Prussia, Posen, Danzig and, in accordance with plebiscites, Upper Silesia, parts of Northern Schleswig and Malmédy. She surrendered the Saar Basin to the League of Nations for fifteen years, at the expiration of which the inhabitants will decide by a plebiscite whether they will become part of France or Germany.

**German Military and Naval Power** France had been invaded by Germany twice within fifty years, and was determined to obtain security against another invasion. The population of France was 40,000,000 and was stationary : that of Germany was from 60,000,000 to 70,000,000 and was increasing. France would obviously be seriously outnumbered if another war broke out. She therefore resolutely opposed the union of Austria and Germany, the *Anschluss* which

would have added six million men to the fighting force of Germany, and insisted that the naval and military forces of Germany should be strictly limited. The German army was to be reduced immediately to 100,000 men, conscription was to be abolished and the manufacture of munitions rigidly controlled. Germany was to surrender all her submarines and all other ships of war except six battleships, six cruisers, twelve destroyers and twelve torpedo-boats. She was to give an equivalent in tonnage of her merchant shipping to compensate for allied shipping sunk by her submarines. As a further protection for France Germany was forbidden to hold by military force any part of the left bank of the Rhine, or that part of the right bank which lay within fifty kilometres of the river. The German fleet was given up, forty thousand cannons were blown to pieces and all German fortified places within fifty kilometres of the Rhine were dismantled.

The Allies recognized that it would be impossible to make Germany pay the whole cost of the war, but they required **Reparations** Germany to give compensation for all damages done to civilian property, and, on the demand of Mr. Lloyd George and in spite of the opposition of President Wilson, included in this item the cost of military pensions and separation allowances. Germany was also to pay any debts which Belgium had incurred to the Allies. Germany was to pay £1,000,000,000 by May 1st, 1921; conditions of further payment were to be settled by a Reparations Commission which was to be established immediately. Germany was to give to France twenty million tons of coal a year for ten years, and to Belgium eight millions.

German colonies were divided among the Allies not, as a rule, as absolute possessors but as mandatories of the League **German Colonies** of Nations to which they were to report annually. The mandated territories included some countries which had never been German territory. Great Britain received mandates for Palestine and Mesopotamia, for the German colonies of East Africa and part of Togoland and the Cameroons; Syria, part of Togoland and the Cameroons

were assigned to France; Kiaochou, Shantung and the islands of the North Pacific were handed over to Japan; the islands of the South Pacific to Australia, and Samoa to New Zealand; Belgium got part of German East Africa; German South-West Africa was given to the Union of South Africa 'as integral portions of its territory'.

A further clause provided that the Kaiser, and any other persons the Allies might select, should be surrendered for trial for military offences. But Holland refused to surrender the Kaiser, and the only trials that took place were those of insignificant offenders.

Of the minor conditions of the Treaty the most interesting were those which provided that Van Eyck's famous painting, *The Adoration of the Spotless Lamb*, should be restored to the Cathedral at Ghent, and that the copy of the Koran which had belonged to the Caliph Othman should be given to the King of the Hedjaz.

The Treaty of Versailles made peace with Germany only. The terms of peace with the other opponents of the Allies <sup>Supplementary Peace Treaties</sup> were settled by a number of supplementary treaties, in each of which the Covenant of the League of Nations was included. The Treaty of Saint Germain-en-Laye was made with Austria on September 10th, 1919. It confirmed the dismemberment of Austro-Hungary which had been effected by the Treaty of Versailles, and provided that Austria should remain an independent state unless the League of Nations agreed to its union with another.

By the Treaty of the Trianon,<sup>1</sup> Hungary was reduced to about half her previous extent, largely owing to the cession of territory to Czechoslovakia. The treaty caused consternation in Budapest and the Hungarian newspapers placed a mourning border around their reports. The fear that Hungary might attempt to recover some of the land she had lost led to the formation of the *Little Entente* which included Czechoslovakia, Jugoslavia and Roumania and to which Poland, although not a member, was friendly. Bulgaria

<sup>1</sup> The Grand and Little Trianons, the smaller palaces in the Park of Versailles.

made peace by the Treaty of Neuilly on November 27th, 1919, and ceded to Greece the north coast of the Aegean and to Roumania the Dobrudja. The Treaty of Sèvres, which prescribed the terms of peace with Turkey, was concluded at Sèvres on August 10th, 1920, but did not come into force because it was never accepted by the Sultan. It left Constantinople and Gallipoli to Turkey, but deprived her of Syria, Palestine and Mesopotamia; it gave Smyrna to Greece. Although the Sultan still retained Constantinople, from which at one time the Allies had desired to expel the Turks, the proposed dismemberment of the Turkish Empire excited such national opposition that it proved the immediate cause of a restoration of Turkish power that was destined to involve Great Britain in serious difficulty in the near future.

The making of the Treaty of Versailles had proved a most difficult and laborious task. The Treaty itself was so long <sup>The Treaty partly suc-</sup> that its index alone was three times as great as <sup>cessful</sup> the whole text of the Treaty of Berlin. Its innumerable details bore witness to the great industry of those to whom the drafting of the Treaty had been assigned. It attained a considerable measure of success and Professor Mowat<sup>1</sup> asserts that 'it contained a fairer adjustment of territories than had previously existed, and in the Covenant of the League of Nations it had the means for a beneficent order of international society in the future'.

But its value was greatly impaired when on March 19th, 1920, the Congress of the United States, with whom the final <sup>The With-drawal of the United States</sup> approval of Foreign Policy rests, refused to ratify the arrangements President Wilson had made. It was in vain that the President, whose health had been impaired by his labours in Europe, embarked on a hurried tour through the States in which he proposed to deliver fifty speeches in twenty-five days. The effort was too great and he was stricken with paralysis two days before he completed his programme.

<sup>1</sup> *A History of European Diplomacy, 1914-1925*, p. 154.

The action of Congress meant the reaffirmation of the Monroe Doctrine. The United States again withdrew from European affairs, again insisted on the principles of 'America for the Americans' and 'the Americans for America'. The Treaty of Versailles, the Covenant of the League of Nations, and the Guarantee Treaty of 1919 lacked the support of a nation which had played a most conspicuous part in their formation.

The Treaty of Versailles accepted in theory, although not always in practice, the principles of nationality and self-determination, and generally recognized that each **Nationalism and Internationalism** separate nation has the right to determine its own form of government. Nationalism had played a great part in the recent history of Europe. But the Concert of Europe had involved the recognition of the wider principle of Internationalism and the Treaty of Versailles gave a fuller meaning to Internationalism by extending its scope to the whole world. The League of Nations, a great feat of constructive statesmanship, was meant to be a federation of the world, deriving its power from an international conscience, insisting on the universal obligation of international law, and having for its first object the preservation of peace throughout the world.

The Treaty of Versailles did not settle the question of the reparations which were to be paid by Germany; or take effective measures for general disarmament; or deal with the problem of the debts due from one ally to another. To-day, fifteen years after the Treaty was signed, these problems continue to harass the diplomatists of all nations. The Treaty made no provision for the economic chaos that resulted from the use of vast sums of money solely for destruction. To-day the world is still suffering from the results of the loss of capital destroyed in the war and from the consequences of the tariffs and the inflation of currency by which nations have sought to re-establish their financial position. Economic restoration still remains one of the world's gravest problems.

The Germans were compelled to accept the Treaty of Versailles without taking part in the negotiations which preceded

it. They believed that President Wilson's Fourteen Points ~~Germany and~~ were to be the basis of the Treaty of Versailles, the Treaty and were greatly disappointed because the victorious Allies refused to be bound by conditions which they had been willing to accept before victory was assured. The Germans persistently maintained and honestly believed that for them the Great War had been a war of defence against 'encirclement', and bitterly resented the 'War guilt' clauses of the Treaty. Most of the Allies were absolutely convinced that the main responsibility for the war rested upon Germany. The final verdict must be left to those who can judge the issue with the accuracy which only the perspective of time can afford. The Germans further maintained that as the old Imperial system under which the war had been waged had been overthrown, it was unjust to penalize the new Republic for the acts of its predecessor. The Allies had no assurance that a change of government meant a change of heart and felt bound to take all necessary precautions to prevent Germany from again destroying the peace of Europe. The Allies justly resented the 'ruthlessness' which the Germans had shown by the sack of Louvain, and the merciless submarine campaign which had ended only on October 16th, 1918, when the Irish Mail Steamer *Leinster* was torpedoed and four hundred and fifty passengers were drowned. The Germans were horrified at the appalling suffering which the blockade of the Allies had inflicted on their women and children.

In these circumstances it is easy to understand why the Allies, largely owing to the insistence of France, imposed so heavy a punishment upon Germany. But many impartial critics maintain that the terms of the Treaty were excessive and that revenge and not just punishment was the object sought. They hold that rights which the Great War was supposed to have won for mankind were denied to the conquered nations. General Smuts sorrowfully declared: 'A new heart must be given not only to our enemies, but to ourselves. A new spirit of generosity and humanity, born in the hearts of the people in this great hour of common suffering and sorrow, can alone heal the wounds inflicted on

the body of Christendom'. Events were soon to prove that no satisfactory settlement could be made until the terms of the Treaty of Versailles had been modified, and until a new spirit had arisen in Germany.

## CHAPTER XV

### FROM VERSAILLES TO LOCARNO, 1919-1925

**T**HE Treaty of Versailles was only the first step towards the new order which the Allies hoped to establish after the Great War. The history of the last fourteen years deals largely with the attempts that have been made to remedy the defects, and make up the deficiencies of the Treaty of Versailles. In all the negotiations that have taken place Great Britain has played an important part and her Foreign Policy has been marked by the strong support it has given to the League of Nations.

Many grave problems demanded solution. The Soviet government was a source of danger to Europe for it was based on the idea of class war ; it was definitely opposed to constitutional government and particularly hostile to Great Britain. The Sultan had refused to ratify the Treaty of Sèvres ; the revival of Turkish nationality under the energetic leadership of Mustapha Kemal was soon to imperil the peace of Europe. Poland, unduly conscious of her new position as a great European state, was in a most aggressive mood. The *Little Entente*, an alliance formed to protect their interests in 1921 between Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Roumania, added another complication to European politics. The Reparations Commission failed to make adequate provision for the repayment by Germany of compensation for civilian damages and the cost of war pensions. The problem of disarmament was urgent, but every nation was bent on maintaining its own security by armaments and refused to disarm. No arrangement had been made for the settlement of debts incurred by the Allied governments to each other. The economic condition of Austria was chaotic ; it was so bad that Great Britain tried to save the country

from starvation by making loans in 1919, and in 1922 joined in a scheme for reviving its commerce and manufactures. All the countries of central Europe strongly resented the transfer of their nationals to other states.

No nation could tackle these problems alone and the Congress System of the early nineteenth century was revived in order to reach an international settlement. Between February 2nd, 1920, and March 1923 twenty-four conferences of the Powers were held, usually with most disappointing results. The League of Nations was doing good work but was hampered by the fact that neither Germany, Russia nor the United States were members.

Serious differences between France and Great Britain added to the difficulties of reconstruction. The refusal of **France seeks Security** the American Congress to ratify either the Treaty of Versailles or the Guarantee Treaty of March 1919<sup>1</sup> made France more anxious about her security. She therefore urged that Germany should be compelled strictly to comply with the provisions of the Treaty of Versailles and showed a strong desire to enforce by arms the payment of reparations and the disarmament of Germany. The contention of France was supported by the *Little Entente*. France suspected that Germany was trying to evade the payment of reparations and to make her army stronger than the Treaty allowed, and events proved that her suspicions were just. To strengthen her position France in September 1920 made an agreement with Belgium and in February 1921 with Poland by which the states concerned undertook to give each other aid if necessary. In January 1924 France made an alliance with Czechoslovakia. Germany again feared that she was being encircled and pointed out that while her army was limited to 100,000 men, the combined forces of France and the *Little Entente* numbered over a million.

The Treaty of Versailles had aroused very bitter feeling in Germany. The Germans believed that the peace that had **Germany and the Powers** been imposed upon them was unjust. They were aggrieved because nothing had been done to effect the general disarmament which the Treaty of Versailles

<sup>1</sup> p. 165.

contemplated although their own military power had been broken ; they particularly resented the clause which imputed to them the whole blame for the war and the strong protests their representatives made on this point seriously hindered the settlement that Europe so urgently needed ; they were undoubtedly suffering from great distress and maintained that it was impossible to pay the heavy reparations which were demanded by the Allies. Great Britain and France were anxious to maintain the *Entente Cordiale*, but the differences that arose in their attitude towards Germany, Russia, Poland and Turkey were so acute that the *Entente* was preserved only with the greatest difficulty.

Great Britain desired to bring Germany back to the Concert of Europe. Mr. Lloyd George held that ' a free, a contented and a prosperous Germany is essential to civilization '. He wished to give a liberal interpretation to the Treaty of Versailles and thought that the amount of reparations required from Germany was excessive. France insisted that the terms of the Treaty should be strictly carried out. But while the attitude of Great Britain towards Germany was fundamentally different from that of France Mr. Lloyd George strongly opposed the attempt of Germany to restore her military power. The army that Germany was maintaining was twice as large as the Treaty of Versailles allowed. In April 1920 a German force had entered the demilitarized Rhine area and French troops therefore occupied Frankfort and Darmstadt. Investigation had shown that Germany was keeping far more war material than the Treaty of Versailles permitted. At a Conference held at Spa in July 1920 Mr. Lloyd George insisted on the strict observance of the terms of the Treaty, and a great amount of German guns and munitions of war was destroyed.

A serious difference arose as to the allocation of Upper Silesia, a rich industrial district which both Poland and <sup>Upper Silesia</sup> many were anxious to obtain. In a plebiscite held on March 20th, 1921, in accordance with the Treaty of Versailles, 717,122 of inhabitants had voted for inclusion in Germany, while 483,514 desired to be incorporated in Poland. It was decided to divide the district, but while France thought that three-quarters should be assigned to Poland, Great

Britain thought that Germany should receive this amount. Neither country would yield, but a breach in the *Entente* was averted by the reference of the question to the League of Nations which, in defiance of the plebiscite, awarded to Poland the greater part of Upper Silesia. The loss of the valuable iron and coal mines of this district made it more difficult for Germany to pay the reparations which the Allies demanded.

Great Britain and France viewed with great apprehension the growth of Bolshevism in Russia. In 1919 both countries had sent assistance to Koltchak and Denikin who had rebelled against the Soviet ; during the winter of 1919-20 a British force was fighting in the extreme North of Russia. Great Britain sent warships to protect the new state of Estonia from Bolshevik attacks.

**Great Britain, Russia and Poland** The rebellion failed, but the Bolsheviks were soon at war with Poland which, in defiance of the Peace Conference, was striving to secure White Russia and the rich agricultural and mineral country of the Ukraine as a barrier against the Soviet. The Poles were repulsed, but when the Bolsheviks proposed to invade Poland Mr. Lloyd George asserted that any such intervention would lead Great Britain to protect Poland 'with all the means at her disposal'. In January 1920 a delegation from Russia, led by M. Krassin, came to London. It professed to represent the Russian Co-operative Societies but really represented the Soviet. The delegates seized the opportunity to preach Communism in England and persuaded the London dockers to refuse to load munitions of war which were destined for the Polish Army. Encouraged by the reports they received from M. Krassin, the Bolsheviks invaded Poland and advanced nearly to Warsaw. In spite of the recent statement of Mr. Lloyd George no help was sent from England, but a French force, under General Wrangel, helped the Poles to defeat the invaders on the Vistula and to drive them in headlong flight back to their own country. The Poles strongly resented the failure of Great Britain to give the aid they had been led to expect ; the help that France had afforded in 'the miracle of the Vistula' strengthened her good understanding with Poland.

Great Britain now changed her attitude towards Russia. In August 1920 France recognized the separatist government which General Wrangel had temporarily established in the South of Russia, but Great Britain, which realized that intervention had failed and hoped to establish friendly relations with the Soviet, refused to follow her example. Great Britain was the first of the Allied Powers to enter into negotiation with the Soviet government. On March 31st, 1921, Mr. Lloyd George made a Trade Agreement with Russia which undertook to cease from all propaganda against British interests. But that undertaking was not kept and active measures were taken by the Soviet to stir up disaffection in India against the British rule and to assist the cause of Communism in England.

A conference was held at Genoa in April 1922 to deal with the economic position of Russia. The Soviet was represented for the first time. The Russian delegates <sup>Genoa, 1922</sup> aroused great interest and suffered from a considerable amount of lionizing. They used the occasion to preach the cause of Communism and with great effrontery suggested to Mr. Lloyd George that if the Allies would pay five million pounds as compensation for damage done to Russia owing to the support given by Great Britain and France to the recent rebellions against the Soviet, the latter would discharge the debts due from the Czarist government to the Allies, which amounted to half that sum. Neither the Russians nor the Germans found favour at the Conference and, owing partly to indignation at their treatment, partly to opposition to the policy of the Allies, they made the Treaty of Rapallo on April 16th. Germany, without consideration for the Conference, formally recognized the Soviet government *de jure*, and made an agreement for the extension of trade between Germany and Russia. This action provoked a strong protest from the Allied statesmen at Genoa and led M. Poincaré to warn Germany that if she failed to pay the reparations which would fall due on May 31st, 'each interested nation would have the right to take any measures which their interests required'.

In spite of the agreement of March 1921 the policy of

the Russian government continued to threaten the peace of Europe. In 1919 leading members of the Soviet helped to

**The Soviet and Great Britain** form the Third International in order to establish the supremacy of the working-classes by means of a general revolution. The Third International adopted a policy of aggressive class warfare which threatened British interests in the Colonies, in London and on the Clyde. Strong protests were made by the Foreign Office, but the Soviet asserted that it could do nothing to check the action of the Third International over which it had no official control. In 1923 the Soviet brutally ill-treated some British subjects in Russia and the communications it addressed to the Foreign Office on the subject were declared by Lord Curzon to be 'studied affronts'. Lord Curzon's firm attitude compelled the Soviet to withdraw the offensive communications and to give compensation for the ill-treatment they had inflicted on his fellow-countrymen.

But Mr. Lloyd George persisted in his attempt to maintain friendly relations with the Soviet and his action was strongly supported by the Labour party. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald became Prime Minister in January 1924 and adopted a policy which his party applauded as friendly to Russia while his critics regarded it as weak truckling to an enemy of Great Britain. In February he recognized the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as the *de jure* rulers of Russia. Soon afterwards he made draft treaties with the Soviet which for several reasons aroused bitter criticism. Loyal subjects strongly resented the omission of the King's name from the preambles of these treaties. The admission of the right of Russia to heavy damages for British intervention after the Great War, which Mr. Lloyd George had repudiated at Genoa, and the grant of diplomatic immunity to Russian Trade delegates gave great offence. A storm of indignation was aroused by the discovery of the 'Zinovieff letter' which seemed to prove that some members of the Labour party were on friendly terms with the Third International. The Labour party was thrown out and in November 1924 the new Conservative government repudiated the treaties which Mr. MacDonald had drawn up. The general feeling of the

nation strongly endorsed their refusal to conclude such an agreement with a state whose political principles were directly opposed to those of Great Britain, and which, in spite of repeated promises to abstain from anti-British propaganda, made such propaganda one of the leading features of its unofficial Foreign Policy.

Difficulties that arose with Turkey also led to differences between France and Great Britain. Although the Sultan **Turkey and the Powers** had refused to ratify the Treaty of Sèvres<sup>1</sup> the Allies allowed him to retain Constantinople, partly because the British feared that the Mohammedans of India would resent the expulsion of the Sultan, partly because great jealousy would be aroused if Constantinople was given to one of the European Powers. Demilitarized zones were established to guard the Straits ; the British occupied the zone of Chanak, other zones were held by French and Italian troops. The control of the Straits was assigned to the League of Nations and it was hoped that, by this arrangement, the problem of the passage of the Straits would cease to provoke such trouble as it had caused in the nineteenth century. The French and British governments authorized the Greeks to take possession of Thrace, the town of Smyrna, the adjoining country of Ionia. The Greeks overran Thrace and occupied Smyrna, which they made the base of operations against Anatolia. These measures for the dismemberment of Turkey, and particularly the intervention of the hated Greeks, provoked a strong national rising under the leadership of Mustapha Kemal, and a National Assembly, nominally subject to the Sultan, was set up at Angora in Anatolia. Largely owing to the influence of France and Italy, which now favoured the Turkish national movement, the Greeks were ordered in May 1922 to evacuate Smyrna and restore Thrace to Turkey. On their refusal Mustapha Kemal took up arms, utterly routed the Greeks at Afium Karahissar on August 22nd, 1922, and captured Smyrna. The French and Italians supplied him with arms and he marched towards the neutral zones. The French and Italians withdrew their troops, but a British army under General Harington remained in Chanak, fortified

<sup>1</sup> p. 169.

its position and prepared to resist any further advance on the part of the Turks. The situation was critical. The British and Turkish armies were within touch of each other and British sentries could see the Turks 'grinning through the barbed wire'. A mere accident might have led to war. But fighting was avoided, largely owing to the great skill with which General Harington dealt with a very serious problem and to the good sense shown by Mustapha Kemal who realized that a war with Great Britain might jeopardize the substantial advantages he had already gained. By the Armistice of Mudania, which was concluded on October 11th, 1922, the neutral zones were to be maintained, but Thrace, Adrianople and most of Asia Minor were restored to Turkey.

A Conference which met at Lausanne in November 1922 arranged the terms of peace between Turkey and the Allies. The Turks demanded far more than the Allies would grant and the first session proved a complete failure. But the skilful diplomacy of Lord Curzon led to a final settlement. The terms of the Armistice of Mudania were confirmed; the boundaries between Turkey and Greece were fixed; Turkey recognized the independence of Egypt, the protectorate over which had been renounced by Great Britain in February 1922; Great Britain and Turkey were mutually to settle the frontiers of Irak. Serious difficulties arose about the last condition. When the two Powers found they could not agree the question was referred to the League of Nations whose decision was loyally accepted by both parties.

The policy of the Allies had been deplorably weak. They might have driven Turkey out of Europe in 1918 but failed to do this. Greece thought that she had been betrayed by the Allies. Great Britain, although greatly hampered by the desertion of France and Italy, had prevented the renewal of the war in Europe but was compelled to recognize the new Turkish government. Mustapha Kemal had gained a great triumph. He had inspired national feeling and had not only saved Turkey from destruction but enabled her to retain much of her European territory. He created a New Turkey

and introduced Western methods which promise to make it a progressive and flourishing state.

Two other most pressing problems were Reparations and Disarmament, and different opinions were held by the French and the British on both.

The Treaty of Versailles had provided that Germany should pay to the Allies £1,000,000,000 by May 1st, 1921, and should deliver to France a varying amount of coal up to **Reparations** a maximum of 20,000,000 tons a year and to Belgium 8,000,000 tons a year. The final terms of reparation were to be referred to a Reparations Commission. The prescribed payments were not made and the great distress from which the German people were suffering and the disastrous effects the war had produced upon the trade of the country led Mr. Lloyd George to doubt whether Germany could pay the reparations the Allies demanded. But France was inexorable. She was convinced that any failure of cash payment or coal delivery was due to the deliberate default of Germany, and desired by the further occupation of German territory to secure the full payment of reparations. The Reparations Commission reduced the amount of coal deliveries by about 50 per cent, but by July 1920 Germany had delivered only half of this reduced amount. A Conference at Spa resulted in an undertaking that Germany would pay 2,000,000 tons of coal a month for six months.

In January 1921 the Allies fixed the total amount of reparations which Germany was to pay for civilian damages and military pensions at £11,300,000,000, which was to be paid in forty-two annual instalments and to be supplemented by the payment of 12½ per cent on German exports. The Germans declared that they could pay only one-tenth of the amount. Great Britain promptly passed the British Reparations Recovery Bill which empowered the Government to collect from British purchasers half the amount due for goods imported from Germany; the allied troops occupied Düsseldorf and Ruhrtort.

But these vigorous measures did not produce the desired effect and by May 1921 the Allies concluded that Germany really could not pay the terms which had been imposed in

January, and reduced the total of reparation payments by about one half. Germany was to pay £6,600,000,000 at the rate of £100,000,000 a year and a duty of 25 per cent on German exports. The Germans accepted these reduced terms largely because they feared that further resistance would be immediately followed by the occupation of more territory.

The German government made some attempt in 1921 to pay reparations both in money and coal. But after the expiration of the six months' agreement the delivery of coal fell off and, by April 1922, the money payments that Germany had made to the Allies amounted to little more than the cost of the armies of occupation. Germany declared that the hopeless state of her finances rendered it impossible for her to pay reparations; France asserted that any default was due to the deliberate action of Germany.

In December 1923 the Reparations Commission declared that Germany had deliberately defaulted in its delivery of <sup>The Ruhr</sup> coal. France now determined to put all possible <sup>Valley, 1924</sup> pressure on Germany. She quoted a clause from the Treaty of Versailles which, in case of default by Germany, allowed the Allies to adopt not only 'economic and financial prohibitions' but 'such other measures as the respective Governments may determine to be necessary'. France maintained that this clause allowed any individual government to resort to military force if it pleased, and asserted her intention of effecting a military occupation of the Ruhr Valley. Great Britain denied the right of any one Power to act without the agreement of the rest, and maintained that economic measures alone were contemplated by the Treaty of Versailles. A meeting took place at Paris between the French Premier, M. Poincaré, an energetic champion of French rights, and Mr. Bonar Law, the British Prime Minister, but it only intensified the difference between their two countries and it seemed impossible for the *Entente* to survive. In defiance of Great Britain France occupied the Ruhr Valley on January 11th, 1924. A fully equipped French army, preceded by armoured cars, marched from Düsseldorf to Essen, and the presence of Belgian troops and

a few Italian engineers showed that Italy and Belgium agreed with France. The Germans were furious and their government, yielding to popular clamour, stopped the payment of reparations and ordered the people of the Ruhr to adopt a policy of passive resistance. The French expelled from the district 147,000 Germans who refused to obey their orders ; French railwaymen were brought to work the German railways : French officials assumed control of the coal mines. The unfortunate inhabitants were reduced to the greatest distress : many found it difficult to obtain sufficient food. The German government attempted to send them financial help, but the utter collapse of the mark, which in August was quoted at 55,000,000 to the pound sterling, not only hampered their efforts to relieve the people of the Ruhr Valley but led to financial chaos throughout Germany. A dangerous movement in favour of separation from Germany, which now manifested itself in the Rhineland and Bavaria, added to the difficulties of the unfortunate government. Meanwhile the French refused to budge. In answer to Lord Curzon's strong protests, which had encouraged Germany to maintain her attitude, M. Poincaré courteously but firmly declared that France was resolved to assert her rightful claims against Germany, and that the cessation of passive resistance in the Ruhr district was an essential preliminary to further negotiation with the German government.

The firm policy of M. Poincaré proved successful. Herr Cuno, the champion of passive resistance, resigned in August 1923. Dr. Stresemann, the new German Minister, showed himself strong enough to take the heroic but unpopular measures which were necessary to save Germany. He abandoned passive resistance, which in the last week of its practice had cost the government 3,500 trillions of marks ; the Separatists were suppressed ; the currency was stabilized by the issue of new *rentenmark*.

France was now firmly established in the Ruhr, but she welcomed the establishment of the Committee which was appointed by the standing Reparations Commission to investigate the financial position of Germany and to decide how much she really could pay as reparations.

**The Dawes Plan**

The Committee included two members each from the United States, Great Britain, France, Italy and Belgium, but the members attended by invitation and were not official representatives of their countries. General C. G. Dawes acted as Chairman and to his ability and energy the success of the Committee was largely due.

The Committee reported that the financial condition of Germany made it impossible for her to pay reparations immediately, although her resources were such that, with competent administration, her budget would be balanced within two years. It recommended that a foreign loan of 800,000,000 gold marks should be floated for this purpose. The first payment of reparations, amounting to £50,000,000 was to be made in 1927; from 1929 Germany was to pay a minimum of £125,000,000 a year until the total debt was extinguished, and additional payments would be made if the commercial development of Germany warranted such a step. France was to receive 52 per cent of the total, Great Britain 32 per cent, Italy 10 per cent and Belgium 8 per cent. The budget, bonds on railways (which were to be drastically reorganized), and a tax on transport were the sources from which reparations were to be paid. The receipts from customs and excise were to be taken as security for payment.

Up to 1924 the Allies had failed to settle the problem of reparations. The influence of France had led them to demand sums which Germany could not possibly pay. The Dawes Committee had started by carefully examining the financial resources of Germany and, having found how much the country could pay, had arranged reasonable terms of payment. But the appointment of the Dawes Committee was the direct result of the action of France in the Rhineland. The military occupation of the Ruhr had made Germany understand that she must try to fulfil the conditions of the Treaty of Versailles. Although, contrary to all expectations, the *Entente* survived, Great Britain now realized that she would do more good by co-operating with the League than by making special arrangements with France. And France, for the first time, understood that the terms of the Treaty

of Versailles must be interpreted reasonably and with due regard to the actual condition of Germany.

The Dawes plan was formally adopted by the Powers at a Conference which met in London in July 1924. The issue seemed doubtful, for the Reparations Commission had the right to declare Germany in default and French influence was very powerful on the Commission. But the United States, which was most anxious that the Dawes plan should be accepted, signified its readiness to send a representative to the Commission when the question of default arose ; the addition of an American member greatly strengthened the Commission and did something to remove the fear of Germany that she would not get an impartial hearing. The Conference also decided that if default occurred, sanctions should be applied not by any one interested government but by agreement of all governments concerned.

Strong opposition was offered by the German Nationalists, who thought that the terms of the Dawes plan were too stringent, and by French Nationalists who thought them inadequate. But the moderate party prevailed in each country and the remarkable skill with which Mr. Ramsay MacDonald controlled the meetings in London ensured success. The great problem of Reparations was definitely settled for five years.

By this time little progress had been made with the question of Disarmament. The Treaty of Versailles had insisted on the limitation of armaments in Germany not only to check German aggression but 'in order to render possible the initiation of a general limitation of the armaments of all nations'. The race for armaments had been one of the main causes of the Great War and the League insisted that 'the reduction of national armaments to the lowest point consistent with national safety' was essential for the maintenance of peace.

Circumstances seemed to make it impossible to devise a general formula for disarmament. Rich countries could afford to spend more than poor ones on munitions ; countries that recruited their armies by conscription had an advantage over those that depended on voluntary enlistment. The insular position of Great Britain rendered her immune from military

attack, but France insisted on the need of armaments as a necessary condition of the safety of her frontiers. The general position of Europe was such that war might break out at any time and it seemed dangerous for any country to disarm. In spite of the decision of the Spa Conference,<sup>1</sup> Germany had steadily increased her military forces and her supplies of munitions. Poland lived in constant fear of Germany on the West and Russia on the East. Russia remained bitterly opposed to all forms of bourgeois government and determined at the earliest possible moment to regain the territory she had been compelled to cede to Poland and Roumania. Italy and Jugoslavia were on bad terms. The Balkans continued to be a danger zone and Bulgaria and Greece were soon to go to war. Confidence is an essential condition of Disarmament ; it can never be established on a foundation of suspicion and distrust.

Military disarmament made little progress in Europe, but the Washington Conference took a great step towards naval disarmament. The Conference was held on the invitation of the United States ; it was concerned largely with problems arising in the Pacific Ocean but it led to a reduction in the naval armaments of the European Powers. It met in November 1921 and was attended by representatives of the United States, Great Britain, France, Italy and Japan. The Conference refused to accept the proposal of Great Britain that submarines should be abolished, but limited their use against merchant vessels. France refused to agree to a reduction of war vessels of less than ten thousand tons, but the number of battleships and heavy cruisers of the four Powers was reduced, and it was decided that in future the ratio for these ships should be 5 for the United States and Great Britain, 3 for Japan, 1.75 for France and Italy.

Political questions of considerable importance were settled at this Conference. The Alliance between Great Britain and Japan, which had caused considerable feeling in the States, was superseded by a Treaty made between Great Britain, the United States, France and Japan in December 1921 to main-

<sup>1</sup> p. 175.

tain the *status quo* in the Pacific. The Allies agreed to maintain the territorial integrity of China and proved their good faith by surrendering some concessions they had received. Great Britain gave up Wei-Hai-Wei which she had leased in May 1898,<sup>1</sup> Japan restored to China Kiaochou,<sup>2</sup> which had been leased by China to Germany in January 1898 and captured by the Japanese soon after the outbreak of the Great War. The Japs renounced any claim to the exclusive possession of Shantung ; satisfactory arrangements were made as to the control of the important Shantung Railway ; the Chinese agreed that foreign merchants should have full facilities for trade.

The Conference of Washington was one of the few successful Conferences of the period. It established peace in the Pacific for a time and showed that disarmament, which so far had failed in Europe, was not a mere ideal but a matter of practical politics. The action of Great Britain in accepting parity of battleships with the United States involved the surrender of the command of the seas which she had always enjoyed, and must be regarded as a substantial contribution to the cause of peace.

The Inter-Allied Debts formed another of the war problems which remained to be solved. In 1918 the debts due from **War Debts** the Allies to the United States amounted to £1,415,000,000 and the latter had incurred no debts to any of the Allies. Great Britain was owed £1,861,000,000 and owed £1,216,000,000. The balance of debt was in favour of Great Britain but against France, Italy and Belgium.

The question of war debts led to acute controversy between Great Britain and the United States. The central problem was whether the debt Great Britain owed to the United States was to be regarded from the strictly commercial point of view as payment due for goods supplied, or as part of the cost of the Great War. The Americans pointed out that they had paid in cash for all goods they had purchased and held that a repudiation of the debt owed by Great Britain would be contrary to the best traditions of commerce. They asserted that

<sup>1</sup> p. 122.

<sup>2</sup> p. 122.

they had entered the war to save the Allies, that they had sent 2,000,000 men to fight in Europe at a cost of 30,000,000,000 dollars, and, unlike the Allies, had received no German Colonies after the war. Great Britain maintained that the interests of the United States and the cause of democracy had been maintained by the united action of the Allies in the Great War ; that Germany was the common enemy of all and that it was the duty of the Allies to use all their resources in men and money as a common fund ; that the debts would not have been incurred if the United States had been ready for war in March 1917, and that therefore the war loans must be regarded as compensation for the heavy loss of lives that the late entry of the United States had imposed on other nations. The United States held that the American loans enabled Great Britain to secure war supplies without borrowing from British subjects ; Great Britain replied that the money she had borrowed had been used to maintain the rate of exchange and to purchase in America goods, and particularly foodstuffs, which were essential for the successful prosecution of the war in which the United States were engaged. Great Britain had suggested at the Peace Conference that all war debts between the Allies should be cancelled ; in August 1922 she had offered to cancel all debts due to her from the Allies and all reparation payments due from Germany except that portion which would enable her to pay her debts to the United States. Both these suggestions were rejected by the United States who asserted that debts due to the States were largely payments for value received ; refused to regard such debts as a whole and insisted on separate payment by each individual debtor. Until the capital was repaid the United States agreed to accept 3 per cent interest per annum from Great Britain, 1·6 per cent from France and 0·4 per cent from Italy.

France had not yet obtained Security. Congress had refused to ratify the Guarantee Treaty which President **France and Security** Wilson had made. Article X of the Covenant of the League of Nations bound the members 'to respect and preserve as against external aggression the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all members of the League ', but the methods whereby protection

was to be afforded were not specified, and France regarded this clause as little better than a pious opinion. The Guarantee which Great Britain had given in 1919 was one-sided and Frenchmen felt that it was not consistent with the dignity of their country. The occupation of the Ruhr Valley had aroused bitter resentment in Germany and strengthened the aggressive National party. It was common knowledge that Germany had not kept to the limitation of military forces and equipment which the Treaty of Versailles had prescribed, and France feared that the recent additions would be used against her. She had tried to strengthen her position by alliances with Belgium and Poland<sup>1</sup> but felt that further measures must be taken to ensure the security which she ardently desired. A Pact of Non-Aggression for four months had been made at Genoa in 1922, but such a temporary measure afforded no permanent assurance of security for France or peace for Europe. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald said 'it is not merely a French problem, it is a European problem'.

In 1924 and 1925 two serious efforts were made to deal with the question. In September 1924 the Assembly of the League of Nations issued the Protocol of Geneva which forbade private war between nations, compelled arbitrators to give an award on grounds of equity in cases in which international law did not apply, and required members of the League to enforce by war if necessary the award of the arbitrators. The Protocol included a suggestion which Mr. Ramsay MacDonald had made earlier in the year that areas on the frontiers of unfriendly states should be demilitarized. But the British Government preferred regional pacts and refused to accept the Protocol of Geneva on the ground that, if Great Britain accepted the pact, she might be required to take part in a European war for a cause which did not affect her own interests and which had been decided by a body in which her representatives formed only a small minority. National interests, which had caused the United States to repudiate the Treaty of Versailles, led Great Britain to repudiate the Protocol of Geneva.

In June 1925 Germany suggested that Great Britain,

<sup>1</sup> p. 174.

France, Germany and Italy should make an agreement to maintain the existing position on the Rhine. **The Rhineland Pact, 1925** The Rhineland Pact definitely recognized that Alsace and Lorraine were French territory, and marked a great improvement in the attitude of Germany, but Great Britain was unwilling to commit herself to further intervention in Europe in view of the heavy obligations which her Dominions imposed on her in all parts of the world, and for a time it seemed as if the proposal would produce no effect. The problem of security remained unsettled in the summer of 1925.

But the Locarno Conference, which opened on October 8th, 1925, and closed on October 16th, proved a great success and settled, for a time at least, the question of Security. Although the suggestion for a Rhineland Pact had not been accepted by Great Britain in June 1925, much quiet work had been done in the Foreign Offices of Europe, particularly by Mr. Austen Chamberlain and M. Briand. As a result of their labours representatives of Great Britain, France, Italy, Germany, Czechoslovakia and Poland met at Locarno. The atmosphere was favourable, for Germany showed a conciliatory spirit by acknowledging Alsace-Lorraine as French territory, and although, to soothe the German Nationalists, Herr Stresemann put forward a request for the absolution of Germany from the guilt of causing the war, the rejection of the offer did not prevent him from co-operating with the other members of the Conference. The meetings were informal, the delegates took council not only in the Palais de Justice at Locarno but in the garden of a wayside inn on the Lake of Geneva, and even by the bedside of Herr Stresemann who had retired to bed owing to indisposition. Progress was rapid. Great Britain now joined with Belgium, Italy, France and Germany in accepting the Rhineland Pact. The Covenant of the League bound Great Britain to take military action if necessary against any state which went to war without submitting her case to the Council of the League ; it also bound her to protect the independence of members of the League against aggression. To these obligations the Pact of Locarno added the duty of maintaining the *status quo* on the Rhine. Germany, France and Belgium undertook to keep

peace with each other and to decide by arbitration any difficulties that might arise. Germany concluded arbitration treaties with Poland and Czechoslovakia. A new spirit seemed to have arisen. Germany now voluntarily accepted the territorial settlement made by the Treaty of Versailles on her western frontier ; she renounced all right to alter peace treaties by war ; she was willing to become a member of the League of Nations ; she had laid aside the arrogance her representatives had too often displayed at previous Conferences. The Allies now treated Germany not as an outsider of dubious character, but as a worthy member of the Conference, and a desirable candidate for admission to the League of Nations.

By October 1925 the general position had improved. The political atmosphere seemed to be inspired by the 'spirit of Locarno', to which the recent Conference had given rise. Distinct progress had been made with regard to reparations ; the Washington Conference had established a valuable precedent for naval disarmament. But difficult problems still remained. France had not yet gained the security she desired ; nothing had been done to settle inter-allied debts ; military disarmament seemed an impossible ideal.

## CHAPTER XVI

### AFTER LOCARNO, 1925-1933

THE Pact of Locarno discredited force and greatly improved the prospect of peace in Europe, but events that followed the Pact showed that grave political problems still awaited solution.

The Germans had shelved the question of War Guilt at Locarno but the grievance remained, and Germany felt that, *Germany and as Chancellor Marx said in 1924, she 'had been the Powers' branded as a criminal to humanity'* who had lost her colonies because she was unworthy to hold them. As soon as the Treaty was concluded France, in November 1925, had evacuated Cologne but continued to hold the Palatinate with 60,000 troops. The Treaty had given France additional guarantees for the security of her Eastern border, but the interests of her ally Poland might lead to difficulties in Eastern Europe and the occupation of the Rhineland would limit the power of Germany to undertake an aggressive policy against Poland. Germany claimed that, as she had disarmed and was complying with the terms of the Dawes report, the whole of the Rhineland should be evacuated and all nations should disarm. The alliance France made in 1927 with Jugoslavia was regarded in Germany as a further attempt to encircle her. Although M. Briand declared that the Treaty of Locarno had opened up a new era between France and Germany, the French still distrusted the Germans and refused to disarm ; most of the countries of Western Europe viewed with concern the friendly relations which had been established between Germany and Russia. German nationalism remained volubly aggressive and Junker officials showed little sympathy with Herr Stresemann's pacific policy.

The recognition of Germany as one of the Great Powers was essential for the stability of Europe, and the Pact of Locarno had provided that Germany should become a member of the League of Nations with a seat on the Council. A special meeting was held at Geneva in March 1926 for the formal election of Germany, but, in spite of the strong support of Great Britain, the proposal was defeated owing to the opposition of Brazil and Spain who demanded seats on the Council for themselves. The action of these two countries, which gained the secret approval of some of the Western Powers, was followed by a treaty of Neutrality which Germany concluded with Russia in April 1926. France, which in January 1924 had made an alliance with Czechoslovakia, made an alliance with Roumania in June 1926; Europe appeared to be tending towards a revival of the Group System which was inconsistent with the principles of the Pact of Locarno.

On September 8th, 1926, Germany was unanimously elected a member of the League of Nations and received a permanent seat on the Council. Brazil and Spain therefore resigned from the League, but M. Briand strongly supported the candidature of Germany and in a magnificent speech declared that 'with the League goes peace, without it the menace of war and blood'. Germany had felt that the League had, in its early days, been used as a means of maintaining the Peace of Versailles and had complained that while Memel and Danzig, two German cities, had, in spite of the claims of nationality, been removed from the sway of Germany for strategic reasons, in the case of Upper Silesia nationality had been made the excuse for depriving Germany of territory she had long possessed. Her admission to the Council of the League enabled Germany to plead her own case in person, and fuller knowledge of the working of the League made her appreciate better the splendid service it was rendering to Europe. In spite of the efforts of extremists in both countries the relations between the governments of France and Germany so far improved that in 1927 they concluded a Commercial Treaty.

Article XV of the Covenant of the League of Nations does

not prohibit the use of war as an instrument of national policy and recognizes that a nation may, in certain conditions, go to war to maintain or secure its rights.

1927

The Pact of Locarno definitely committed Great Britain and Italy to go to war if necessity arose to maintain the settlement it had effected in the West of Europe. The Peace Pact of August 1927, which is often called the Briand-Kellogg Pact, outlawed war and so took a further and most important step forward in the cause of peace. It declared that war was a denial of international law and asserted that it must no longer be used as a political weapon.

The Pact, which was due to the co-operation of the United States, was welcomed by Germany as a guarantee of peace ; it seemed likely to give to France the absolute security she so earnestly desired ; it would establish throughout the world the conditions that prevail in the British Empire ; it would render great armies and navies unnecessary except as police forces on sea and land, or as a means of coercing an outlaw state. Its force was weakened by the assertion of the United States that war is permissible as a means of self-defence, by the action of Great Britain which excluded Egypt and some other regions from its operation, and by the lack of any machinery to enforce its terms. But the Peace Pact is 'the most significant and far-reaching event that has taken place since the signature of the Covenant of the League of Nations'.<sup>1</sup>

By 1933 there was manifest a growing tendency for the Western Powers to split up into two opposing blocks in support of France and Germany. This danger was counteracted by the conclusion, on the suggestion of Signor Mussolini, of a Four Power Pact by which Great Britain, France, Italy and Germany united to maintain the peace of Europe. In August 1933 the four countries undertook 'to consult together on all questions appertaining to them and, with the framework of the League of Nations, try to maintain peace ; to safeguard decisions which may be taken by the League' ; to do their utmost to promote Disarmament and economic reorganization. The

**The Four Power Pact, 1933**

<sup>1</sup> *The Round Table*, 1927-8, p. 727.

Pact, which was to last ten years, united the four leading Powers in an attempt to keep the peace of Europe and to support the League of Nations.

In spite of the temporary reaction which had followed the Pact of Locarno, in spite of continued ill-feeling caused by the Polish Corridor, the subjection of many Magyars, Germans, Slavs and Greeks to alien rule, the assertion of Italian authority over the Austrians of Southern Tyrol, the peace of Europe was more firmly established in 1933 than it had been in 1925.

The relations between Great Britain and Russia have shown considerable variation since 1925. In that year Russia took less than 1 per cent of British exports, and British merchants naturally desired to take full advantage of the opportunities for commerce that the vast material wealth of Russia afforded. But the Soviet continued to advocate class war and favoured the spread of Communism in other countries. The Third International persisted in its propaganda ; it met with some success in Persia ; in China, where the value of British interests was estimated at from £400,000,000 to £700,000,000, it aroused a strong anti-British feeling. The resentment caused by this policy was greatly increased when in May and June 1926 the Soviet sent £380,000 to support the general strike which the miners had promoted in England, and Sir Austen Chamberlain strongly protested against this action.

Great Britain and Russia, 1925-33  
Grave suspicions were felt that the Soviet Trade Delegation and 'Arcos', the chief Russian trading agency in London, were supporting the Communist Cause, and on May 12th, 1927, a raid on Soviet House showed that these suspicions were justified. In consequence the Trade Agreement which had been concluded in 1921 was broken off by the Conservative Ministry. But the Labour party, which favoured friendly relations with Russia, took office again. In 1929, Mr. Arthur Henderson concluded another Commercial Treaty, and diplomatic status was again granted to a Soviet Trade Delegation. In the summer of 1933 two employees of the Vickers-Maxim Company were arrested in Russia on a charge of espionage and sabotage. They were found guilty and imprisoned. They absolutely denied that they had acted as spies for the British Government and their denial was

officially confirmed in the House of Commons. The Foreign Secretary strongly protested against the sentences that had been passed on two innocent British subjects and, as the Soviet refused to liberate the prisoners, the British Government broke off all commercial relations between Great Britain and the Soviet. This vigorous action led to an immediate diminution of Russian trade and compelled the Soviet to release the prisoners within a few weeks of their condemnation.

Although the Soviet still preaches Communism and the Third International continues its propaganda against constitutional government, Russia appears to be less dangerous to the peace of Europe than it was ten years ago. The forward policy which Japan has recently adopted has seriously alarmed the Soviet which fears that Japan, if securely established in Manchuria, will probably attempt to secure Vladivostock and the maritime provinces of Eastern Siberia. The German Nazis are the sworn foes of Communism and their desire to 'colonize' Eastern Europe is regarded as a threat to Russia. The co-operation between the Soviet and Germany, which started at Rapallo in 1922<sup>1</sup> and was confirmed by the Treaty of Berlin in 1926,<sup>2</sup> has been weakened. Germany is no longer an ally but an enemy of the Soviet. These new and dangerous political conditions have caused a complete change in the foreign policy of the Soviet. Its deputies seized the opportunity afforded by the London Economic Conference of 1933 to conclude treaties for the stabilization of existing frontiers with ten states which border on Russia including Poland, the *Little Entente*, Turkey, and Afghanistan. By these treaties the Soviet accepted the territorial settlement made by the Treaty of Versailles, it established a barrier of friendly states between Russia and Germany and thus guarded itself against an attack from the rear if war should break out with Japan. The prospects of peace in Eastern Europe have greatly improved since the Soviet has resigned the idea of recovering from Poland and Roumania territory that once belonged to Russia.

But little progress has been made in other directions. The problems of Disarmament and War Debts still remain unsettled, that of economic rehabilitation has become acute.

<sup>1</sup> p. 177.

<sup>2</sup> p. 193.

The Pact of Locarno made no provision for disarmament and Germany justly complained that, although she had been disarmed in 1919, comparatively little had been done to effect the general reduction in armaments which was contemplated by the Covenant of the League of Nations.<sup>1</sup>

Attempts were made to continue the work of naval disarmament which had started at Washington in 1921.<sup>2</sup> The Disarmament Conference at Geneva, 1927 Washington Treaty had limited the number of battleships and heavy cruisers which the Powers might maintain and Great Britain had scrapped 1,797,000 tons of naval shipping between 1918 and 1927. But by 1927 competition in lighter war vessels had led to a marked increase in the construction of light cruisers, destroyers and submarines, and a Disarmament Conference met at Geneva by invitation of President Coolidge in that year. France and Italy were aggrieved because they considered that the Washington Treaty had not allowed them a fair proportion of heavy ships, and only Great Britain, the United States and Japan sent representatives. The United States claimed that they might put the whole of their strength into heavy cruisers. Great Britain asserted that she required at least seventy light cruisers to protect the transport of foodstuffs, to maintain communication with different parts of the Empire, and to patrol disturbed areas such as the Red Sea and Persian Gulf. It was found impossible to establish parity as between heavy and light cruisers and the Conference proved a complete failure. Britain refused to discontinue the construction of light cruisers ; Congress sanctioned the construction of fifteen new ships, although it refused President Coolidge's request that seventy-six should be added to the American Navy.

In 1927 Great Britain and France held a Conference about Disarmament and made an agreement which greatly displeased the United States and Germany. At first serious differences between the two seemed likely to wreck the Conference. France demanded that reservists should not be counted as part of the army, and claimed that each power might build any class of vessel it chose provided it did not exceed the specified tonnage. Great Britain re-

<sup>1</sup> p. 185.

<sup>2</sup> p. 186

sisted both proposals, but ultimately a compromise was reached. Great Britain agreed that French reservists should not be included in the estimate of military forces, while France agreed that navies should be restricted not on the basis of tonnage but by specification of ships and guns. The compromise was regarded, incorrectly, as a new *entente* between Great Britain and France, and it was feared that the position of the League would be impaired by the revival of the old system of alliances. The United States thought that the Washington Treaty was nullified by the new arrangement, and Germany, which had few reservists, strongly resented the addition of French reservists to the military forces which France was to be allowed to maintain.

The problem of disarmament was discussed at a meeting convened by the League of Nations in April 1928. M. Litvinoff, the representative of the Soviet, proposed that all armies and navies and military conscription should be abolished, and denounced the League for its failure to secure disarmament. Count von Bernsdorff, the delegate of Germany, supported M. Litvinoff's criticism of the League, but Lord Cushendun denounced the Soviet for its refusal to co-operate with the League, and declared that M. Litvinoff's proposal was prompted by a desire so to weaken the countries of Europe that they would not be strong enough to resist the spread of Socialism.

Another Naval Conference was held in London in 1930. For the first time the tonnage and character of all ships of war were limited and defined. France and Italy absolutely refused to reduce their navy, but Great Britain, the United States and Japan restricted the unit size of submarines and reduced the number of their battleships, of which Great Britain destroyed five, the United States three and Japan one. But each Power reserved the right to increase its own tonnage if an increase on the part of any other Power made such an action necessary.

A Disarmament Conference which was held at Geneva in 1933 proved a complete failure. A strong difference appeared between Great Britain and the other members. The former insisted on her right to bomb insurgents on the outskirts of

the Empire and persisted in her claim in spite of strong opposition.

In spite of the efforts of Great Britain little real progress towards disarmament has been made since 1924. Between 1924 and 1930 the military expenditure of the United States and the chief nations of Europe increased by more than £150,000,000 per annum. Great Britain and Japan made no increase in this period.

The failure of disarmament in Europe has been largely due to fear. The nations have been afraid to disarm because the position in Eastern Europe remains highly unstable and France, in spite of the fact that the whole of her Eastern Frontier has been made impregnable by an elaborate system of fortifications, still fears Germany. The prospects of peace have been improved by the Peace Pacts of 1925, 1927 and 1933. But dissensions between the Powers or aggressive action by Germany or Russia may lead to war and the peace of Europe rests to-day not so much on Peace Pacts or the League of Nations as on the standing armies of France, Belgium, Poland and the *Little Entente*.

Up to the summer of 1933 it seemed that disarmament, although a failure in Europe, had been effected as far as the Pacific was concerned by the treaties of Washington, 1921, and London, 1930. But the rivalry of Japan and the United States has lately become keener and both countries, although prohibited by the Treaty of London from increasing their fleets before 1936, have adopted programmes of naval construction which will lead to a considerable increase immediately after that date. In June 1933 President Roosevelt approved of the construction of thirty-two new fighting ships at a cost of £50,000,000. Japan immediately arranged for more new ships at a cost of £55,000,000. In July the United States gave a formidable display of naval power in manoeuvres conducted off Hawaii; in August Japan replied to the challenge by carrying out extensive operations in the Western Pacific and arranging a most imposing air display in Tokio and the neighbourhood. France and Italy, who were not parties to the London Treaty, are building a large number of cruisers.

Great Britain, which has loyally observed both the spirit and the letters of the recent treaties, may find herself at a serious disadvantage in the near future. Ten thousand officers and men were released from the British Navy between March 1929 and March 1933 and the personnel of the navy is now 18,000 less than that of the United States and about equal to that of Japan. One hundred and eighty aircraft are attached to the British Navy, the Japanese, American, French and Italian Navies have each about twice as many. In September 1933 the Admiralty issued a new programme providing for the addition of twenty-five new cruisers, an annual addition to the Fleet of fifteen to eighteen destroyers and a substantial addition to the Naval Air Force. It seems as if a new race for armaments has begun and a race for armaments was one of the causes of the Great War.<sup>1</sup>

Largely owing to the influence of Great Britain the Allies evacuated the Rhineland in 1930 although the Treaty of Versailles gave them the right of holding it until 1935, and in February 1931 France made a loan of £1,600,000 to Germany. But the Germans thought that the whole of the Rhineland should have been evacuated in 1925 and the evacuation led to an outburst of Nationalism which has been greatly strengthened by recent developments in Germany. The proposal made in 1931 to establish an Austro-German Customs Union caused consternation in France, which has steadily opposed not only the *Anschluss*<sup>2</sup> but also any tendency to agreement between Germany and Austria on the ground that such union would enormously increase the military power of Germany.

The spread in Germany of the Nazi, or Nationalist-Socialist, movement is a disturbing factor. Opposition to the settlement made at the end of the Great War has <sup>Herr Hitler  
and the Nazis,  
1930-3</sup> expressed itself in three ways. Up to 1923 Germany adopted a policy of passive resistance; Dr. Stresemann endeavoured to secure his aims by diplomacy; the Nazis rely upon force. In 1930 they gained one hundred and seven seats in the Reichstag. In 1933 Herr Hitler obtained

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Hector C. Bywater, *Daily Telegraph*, Sept. 5th, 1933.

<sup>2</sup> The political union of Austria and Germany.

a majority in the Reichstag and has used the opportunity to crush all opposition and to make the Nazis the supreme power in Germany. Hitler's aim is to establish a national party which shall secure prosperity at home and restore to Germany her former position abroad. He relies for support not upon the Junkers, who formed the backbone of the old Nationalist party, but upon the young men of Germany to whom his objects make a strong appeal. The persecution of the Jews, which has been a marked feature of his policy, is said to be due not to their religion, but to a belief that the great influence they have exercised cannot in the interests of Germany be left in the hands of men of alien birth. The Nazis repudiate much of the Treaty of Versailles. July 28th, 1933, the fourteenth anniversary of the signing of the Treaty, was kept as a day of mourning in Germany. Flags hung at half-mast ; in the evening all young people were required to attend a 'Versailles meeting' at which the Treaty was denounced as an outrage on Germany. The Nazis have attempted to establish their power in Austria in defiance of Article 8o of the Treaty of Versailles whereby Germany undertook to respect Austrian independence. It is possible that this attempt is part of a plan to unite all Germans into a great central State which shall include Germany, Austria, and parts of Denmark, Holland, Flanders and Switzerland.

The peace of Europe depends largely upon the manner in which Herr Hitler uses the great power he has secured. He attained his position by force, but on July 7th, 1933, declared that 'the time has come to pass from revolution to evolution'. He accepted the Four Power Pact and thus came into alliance with France, Italy and Great Britain. On receiving 'friendly protests' from these countries he stopped German airmen from dropping Nazi pamphlets in Austrian towns in August 1933. But later in the year Germany resigned her membership of the League of Nations and negotiations between Germany and France for a settlement of their differences proved unsuccessful. If Hitler is able to curb the fiery zeal of his youthful supporters and faithfully to observe the terms of the recent Four Power Pact the peace of Europe may be

maintained. If the extremists of the Nazi party secure control Europe may soon see another Great War.

No satisfactory solution has been found for the problems of War Debts. President Coolidge reasserted the demand of **War Debts** the United States that war debts should be paid in full, but the debtor countries found great difficulty in meeting their obligations owing to the failure of Germany to pay reparations and to the economic crisis caused by the increasing depression in trade. In December 1932 France repudiated payment, but Great Britain paid in full, although there was a general feeling in the country that no further payments should be made. In June and December 1933 Great Britain paid £2,000,000 instead of the £19,000,000 which was due, and President Roosevelt accepted this as a 'token payment', or an acknowledgment that the full amount was legally due.

The problem of Reparations was intimately connected with the economic question. By 1925 the general economic condition had improved. The gold standard was **Reparations** generally established and the Dawes Plan seemed to have settled the thorny problem of reparations. Production increased and from 1925 to 1928 world trade showed an increase of 15 per cent.

For three years Germany paid the instalments fixed by the Dawes Plan. But in spite of these payments the external liability of Germany was not reduced and her indebtedness to other countries was greatly increased by the foreign capital which had been provided for her domestic reconstruction. A further attempt to improve the financial position of Germany was made in 1929 by the Young Plan. A distinction was drawn between 'conditional payments,' which were to be made only if the internal condition of the country made payment possible, and 'unconditional payments,' which were to be made in any circumstances. France was to receive a large proportion of the latter. Mr. Philip Snowden [Viscount Snowden] declared that Great Britain was unfairly penalized by the Young Plan, which he described as 'grotesque and ridiculous', and it proved of little practical use.

By 1930 renewed economic depression aggravated the difficulties of Germany, and the Nazi party, which was rapidly gaining ground, repudiated any further payment of reparations. In order to give Germany time to recover President Hoover declared a moratorium of one year for both war debts and reparations. Great Britain welcomed the declaration, but France assented to this arrangement with reluctance because she persisted in the belief that the failure of Germany was deliberate, and feared that Germany would use the money to increase her military forces. The failure of the Darmstädter Bank on July 13th, 1930, marked an economic crisis which made the payment of reparations impossible and imperilled the payment of interest on the foreign loans which had been floated to assist the financial recovery of Germany.

Another Conference was held at Lausanne in 1932 to deal with the question of War Debts and Reparations. The Conference practically put an end to reparations and relieved Germany of her obligations to the Allied countries. Germany has not paid 'to the uttermost farthing'—and never will. But the Conference did nothing to relieve the Allies of the war debts they owe to the United States, and at present it seems likely that this question may be settled by the refusal of the Allies to pay any more.

By 1933 the economic condition of the world had become desperate. Production had increased so fast that supply **The Economic Crisis, 1933** outran demand; prices fell and unemployment increased; the world was impoverished by the war and could not afford to buy the manufactured goods with which the markets were saturated; the increased use of oil and gas greatly lessened the demand for coal. International debts and depreciated currency made matters worse. All European countries had, in varying degrees, sought to increase their trade by Protection and in 1926 general commerce was greatly hampered by the seventy-six traffic barriers that existed in Europe. The World Economic Conference which met at Geneva in 1927 recognized the disastrous effect that tariffs had produced upon the trade of the world. It

declared that 'the time has come to put an end to increases in tariffs and to move in the opposite direction'. It urged that economic co-operation should replace economic nationalism. The years 1928 and 1929 saw a distinct reduction in tariffs and an attempt to stabilize those that remained by means of Commercial Treaties. But the economic crisis of 1931 led to reaction. Nations imposed new tariffs to protect their own trade and Nationalism again triumphed over Internationalism.

The problem was world-wide, and on June 12th, 1933, the delegates of seventy-six nations representing 2,000,000,000 people met in London to try to save the world from ruin. The position was desperate. Since 1933 1929 the production of raw materials had fallen 30 per cent, international trade had diminished 25 per cent in volume and 50 per cent in prices, national incomes had fallen and in some cases the fall amounted to 50 per cent. The unemployed numbered 30,000,000. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, who presided, declared that, 'No nation can permanently enrich itself at the expense of others. International co-operation is our best way to national recovery.'

On May 16th President Roosevelt expressed his cordial approval of the proposed Conference and said that it 'must establish order out of the present chaos by stabilization of currencies, by freeing the flow of world trade and by international action to raise price levels'. The main object of the Conference was therefore to stabilize currencies, and to raise prices by international action.

When he took office in March 1933 President Roosevelt said that America was 'dying by inches' and he made strenuous efforts to raise prices in the United States. By the end of June prices on all commodities had risen considerably and the price of wheat, which was affected not only by the President's policy but by drought and heat, on June 26th and 27th rose twelve cents a bushel. The rise in prices led to great variations in the value of the dollar; in one single day, Thursday, June 29th, the fluctuations amounted to seventeen and a half points. Thus a successful attempt to raise prices had led not to stabilization but to destabilization of currency.

The two main objects of the Conference appeared to be incompatible.

The action of President Roosevelt, which amounted to a declaration in favour of a free currency system, seriously alarmed France, Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, Italy and other European countries which had adopted the gold standard. They maintained that currency must be stabilized in order that merchants trading with foreign countries may know exactly the prices they will receive for their goods. A 'block' of fifteen states was formed to maintain the Gold Standard and every effort was made to secure the adhesion of Great Britain. Great Britain strongly favours the stabilization of currency but holds that as long as the value of the dollar remains uncertain she must retain freedom of movement for the pound sterling. She refused to join the Gold Block, which appeared to be an economic union of Europe against the United States, and still hoped to secure the help of the latter in establishing world finance on a sound foundation.

Meanwhile President Roosevelt, impressed with the urgent need of improving the industrial position of the United States, had sent a message to the Conference asserting strongly that while 'our broad purpose is the permanent stabilization of every nation's currency', yet 'the sound internal economic system of a nation is a greater factor in its well-being than the price of its currency, and, in changing terms, of the currencies of other nations'. He assured nations that 'balanced budgets and living within their means' were essential if the financial position of the world was to be established on a sound foundation. Largely owing to the persistence of Great Britain a reply was despatched to President Roosevelt on July 3rd which asserted the need of maintaining the gold standard as a means of currency stabilization, and suggested that governments should co-operate with Central Banks to limit the reckless speculation in exchanges which had resulted from the policy of the United States. The President rejected the proposal of the Conference 'in its present form' and the Conference adjourned. Again Nationalism had prevailed over Internationalism but with an important difference from

former occasions. The President does not regard Nationalism as a final principle ; he wishes each nation to put its house in order so that in due time Internationalism may be established on the firm basis of national prosperity.

## EPILOGUE

POLITICAL evolution is marked by progress from a smaller to a larger unit, from a lower to a higher standard of civilization. Progress is not continuous ; it comes not in a flood but like the tide by alternation of ebb and flow. It is slow ; each phase requires centuries for its accomplishment. It is the result of strife and has always involved warfare.

The family, the earliest unit, was superseded by the tribe, which, owing to military reasons, expanded into the tribal kingdom. The union of tribal kingdoms produced the national kingdom. To-day Europe is painfully struggling to attain the higher ideal of Internationalism and our 'present discontents' arise from the conflict between the principles of Nationalism and Internationalism.

The evolution of Nationalism lasted about a thousand years. The principle of Internationalism had been involved in the Holy Roman Empire ; it became a power in modern politics at least a hundred years ago.

In the nineteenth century Internationalism profoundly affected the Treaty of Vienna which revised the territorial settlement of Europe after the Napoleonic wars. It was the basis of the Congress System which broke down when the British representatives left the Congress of Verona in 1822. It led to the Concert of Europe which functioned intermittently, but on several occasions solved problems which had proved too difficult for the ministers of separate states. But Nationalism proved a stronger power in Europe. It upset the settlement which had been made by the Treaty of Vienna. It led to the establishment of the independence of Belgium, the foundation of united kingdoms in Germany and

Italy, and the beginning of the movements which have resulted in the formation of Jugoslavia and Czechoslovakia in 1918.

The Great War might possibly have been averted if the Concert of Europe had not broken down. But Internationalism, which had failed to prevent the war, played a great and, in some ways, a highly successful part in the making of peace. The territorial settlement it effected, which was based on nationality, was probably the best attempt that has ever been made to settle the frontiers of European states after a great war. The establishment of the League of Nations, the most important development of political theory within recent times, was an attempt to organize the peace of the world on a basis of international law. The International Pacts that have been made since 1919 have strengthened the cause of peace.

But Internationalism has not succeeded in solving the problems of our day ; it has not given peace and prosperity to a distracted world. The Paris Peace Conference failed to perform completely its appointed task and this failure has greatly strengthened the cause of Nationalism. Strong National resentment has been provoked by the fact that at least twelve million Europeans are still subject to foreign rule. National feeling has prevented military disarmament and the peace of Europe rests to-day on a foundation of military force. The progress that was made in naval disarmament has been checked and a new race for armaments seems to be impending. National opposition has prevented the solution of financial difficulties. The problem of reparations has simply pestered out and it seems possible that that of war debts will be solved in the same unstatesmanlike way. Economic stress has led to a reaction in favour of Nationalism. The revival of Protection has been a marked feature of the last three years and the failure of the London Economic Conference was a triumph of American Nationalism over Internationalism.

National ambition has led to further complications. The Soviet remains the determined and unscrupulous opponent of constitutional government. Germany has for many years been re-arming in defiance of the Treaty of Versailles and

Herr Hitler, supported by a nation in arms, may prove more dangerous than the old sabre-rattling Junkers. Poland is aggressive ; Bulgaria restless ; Italy which, according to Signor Mussolini, 'must expand or burst', is determined to extend her boundaries in order to provide homes for her superfluous population. But there is no room for Italy to expand within the Mediterranean area and the colonial restrictions imposed by the Peace Treaties have seriously limited her power to secure such extensive colonies as her needs demand. Japan, in defiance of the League of Nations and of her own promise to respect the integrity of China, has occupied Chinese territory. The rivalry between Japan and the United States for the mastery of the Pacific has become acute.

The Foreign Policy of Great Britain becomes a matter of supreme importance in this time of world crisis.

There is no doubt that Great Britain will continue those strenuous efforts in the cause of peace which have long been among the most honourable traditions of her Foreign Office. She will therefore continue strongly to support the League of Nations as the best available instrument for maintaining peace. Article XIX of its Covenant gives to the Assembly of the League the power of urging 'the reconsideration of treaties which have become inapplicable and the consideration of international conditions whose continuance might endanger the peace of the world'. Peace can never be assured as long as one Power keeps another in subjection and the wise exercise of the power the League possesses may ensure the peaceful solution of difficulties which if not solved in peace will certainly be solved by war. The duty of the League is not to maintain but to adjust the Treaty of Versailles.

The League is not a super state possessed of the right to exercise compulsion or discipline upon the subordinate states. Its function is to be the conscience of the world. Its object is peace based on justice. It must by peaceful persuasion induce the nations to accept decisions made by the League, which is composed of their representatives. There must be no compulsory sanctions applied by members to enforce the decisions of the League ; it is not the duty of the League to act as the policeman of the world. It is to be hoped that the

League will in time attain such a commanding influence that its judgments will carry a moral sanction which will enforce the acceptance of its decisions. National interests are so strong at present that they lead, as in the recent case of Japan and Northern China, to a refusal to accept the considered decision of the League. The development of the League as an effective instrument of peaceful Internationalism may supply the solution of this real difficulty.

Experience has shown that the machinery of the League is capable of improvement. The interests of members of the League vary greatly ; questions that are vitally important for some concern others but little. In particular, many European nations are interested mainly in problems of Europe and are but little affected by those that arise in other parts of the world. A suggestion has therefore been made that two departments should be established, one for European and the other for extra-European affairs. This arrangement it is contended would save time and ensure a well-informed consideration of business.

The arrangement of Conferences will continue to be part of the work of the League. Since 1918 fifty-four Conferences have been held, some under the auspices of the League, some by invitation of the governments of the countries in which they meet. Considerable disappointment is felt at the results and doubts have been expressed as to the wisdom of holding Conferences at all. Mr. Lloyd George declared in the House of Commons that the era of Conferences is over ; Signor Mussolini asserts that the world has had 'enough of Conferences' ; Mr. J. H. Thomas 'has lived with economists for five years and is fed up with them', and the man-in-the-street agrees with Mr. Thomas. But Conferences are an essential condition of Internationalism, the very name of which postulates meetings between the nations. Conferences must continue but on more restricted lines. The failure of the London Economic Conference was inevitable for it is impossible to expect agreement from the representatives of seventy-six nations each of which has its own outlook and its own particular interests. The Conferences which gained any success were those in which a few nations were engaged, or in which a small

number of men exercised supreme authority. The Big Four dominated the Peace Conference, the Washington Treaty and the Pact of Locarno were the work of five nations, the Four Power Pact of four. Either therefore the membership of future Conferences must be confined to representatives of the Great Powers and of countries directly interested in the agenda, or a small committee of the Powers must carefully prepare the business before the full Conference meets. The former arrangement might lead to some resentment among countries which were not summoned to attend, the latter would turn the Assembly of the League into a court of Registration. Either course would be better than a repetition of the appalling fiascos which in 1933 have taken place in Geneva and London.

Great Britain has a double part to play. She is the head of the British Empire and also a European state.

The British Empire is a federation of independent states united by ties of relationship, of language and of subjection to the King, but with different commercial and territorial interests. The maintenance of close union would allow the Empire to speak with one voice in the councils of nations, but recent events have somewhat impaired that union. During the war the British Empire fought as a unit under the direction of the War Cabinet which sat in London. But each Dominion attended the Peace Conference and those that followed it as an independent state, free to take its own course whatever the policy of Great Britain might be. Great Britain accepted the Pact of Locarno, but some of the Dominions showed distinct reluctance to accept a treaty which, in certain contingencies, would require them to fight in Europe for causes in which they had little interest. No actual difficulty has arisen as yet, but Locarno showed that the diplomatic unity of the British Empire had been weakened. The question is complicated by the fact that when the King declares war all his subjects become belligerents. It is obvious that to meet the new conditions some arrangement must be made to maintain the interests of each individual British state and at the same time to ensure the united action of the Empire in support of a common Imperial policy.

Attempts have been made, and particularly at the Ottawa Conference, to strengthen the commercial unity of the Empire and to reduce the tariffs with which its members have protected their own industries. Immediately after the failure of the London Economic Conference the nations of the Empire united to maintain the stability of Exchanges within it. The British Empire now forms the largest stable financial unit in the world, and the importance of the new arrangement was shown on July 31st, 1933, when Canada linked the Canadian dollar to sterling by floating a loan of £15,000,000 on the London market. At the same time the Dominions, realizing the difficulties of British farmers, agreed to consider the possibility of restricting their agricultural imports into Great Britain. If success attends these efforts the commercial and financial union between Great Britain and the Dominions will be greatly strengthened and the British Empire may hope for a period of great prosperity. Such an event would have a wide influence. The British Empire, having saved itself by its own efforts, might save the world by its example.

Different opinions are held as to the relations which should exist in the future between Great Britain and other nations.

Great Britain is connected with Europe by geographical position, commercial intercourse and historical tradition. She still holds that the independence of Belgium is essential for the safety of England. She is bound by the Treaty of Locarno to maintain the western frontier of France by armed intervention if necessary. The peace of Europe is one of her chief aims and by the Four Power Pact she has undertaken to collaborate with France, Italy and Germany to maintain it.

But her position as the head of the British Empire, and as an island with no land frontier to defend tends to weaken her connexion with Europe, and although since the Great War she has played a great part in the reorganization of Europe, it would be unwise for her to undertake any further obligations or to make a formal alliance with any European Power. Alliance with one country would lead to a counter-alliance and to the revival of the Group System which, like the domination of a single Power, is inconsistent with Internationalism and has proved fatal to peace in the past.

An alliance with the United States, which some writers advocate, appears to be impossible as long as the Monroe Doctrine remains in force. It would be unwise, for such a step would arouse dissatisfaction in Europe, the Latin States of South America and Japan.

The policy of Great Britain must be to maintain as friendly relations as possible with France, Germany, Italy, the United States and Japan. She must rely upon the prestige she has gained by her own achievements and as head of the British Empire, to re-establish the prosperity of the Empire and do her utmost to ensure a satisfactory International Settlement.

Such a settlement must rest on the foundation of Nationalism. It cannot be effected until nations are secure and prosperous, that is until disarmament and economic restoration have been effected. But confidence is a necessary condition of disarmament. Lack of mutual confidence, particularly in the case of France and Germany, is one of the main reasons why disarmament has made so little progress since 1918. The League of Nations may help to give nations confidence, if it secures a strong position as the impartial judge and just arbitrator of national disputes.

But unselfishness, too, is a necessary condition of a stable settlement. Nations must be willing to surrender voluntarily privileges to which they have a legal right, or advantages which they have long enjoyed. And this is a hard thing, for Nationalism tends to be selfish ; its object is to get, and then to get more. But Great Britain has given a conspicuous example of unselfishness by surrendering the dominion of the seas which she had exercised for centuries. The future of the world depends partly on the willingness of other nations to follow her example and to realize that national relations must be based on interdependence rather than independence.



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